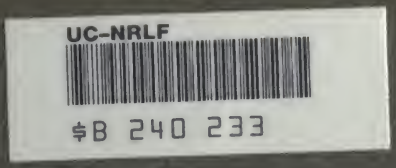
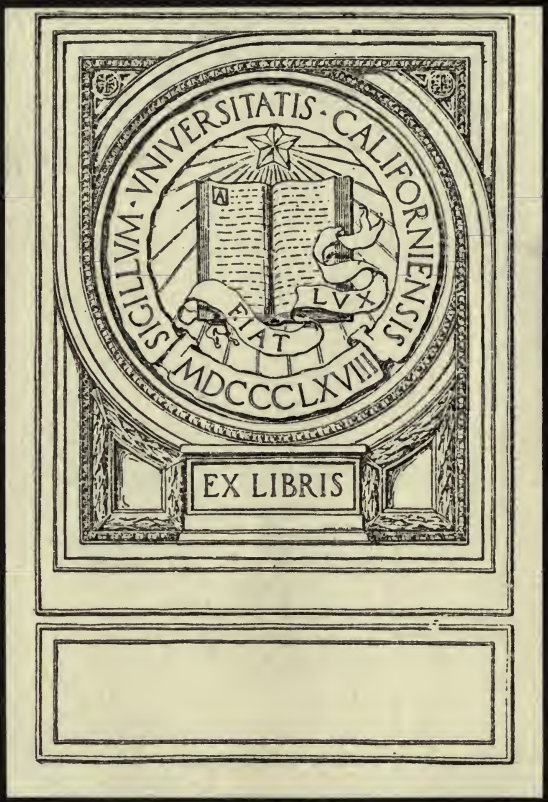
HD
8459
S5C32



YB 64769


SIGILLVM · VNIVERSITATIS · CALIFORNIENSIS
MDCCCLXVIII
LVX
FIAT
EX LIBRIS

Photomount
Pamphlet

~~D491.S4-55~~ 9/19/21

~~Return to~~
~~BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS~~
~~Department of Education~~

The Working Classes of Upper-Silesia

A historical Essay

BY

EMIL CASPARI

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

LONDON AND EDINBURGH
SAMPSON LOW. MARSTON & Co., Ltd.
1921.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

The Working Classes of Upper-Silesia

A historical Essay

BY

EMIL CASPARI

LONDON AND EDINBURHG
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON & Co., Ltd.
1921.

HD8459
S5C32

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

7 SC

The World War has brought many questions of nationality to the fore: chief among these being the question of Upper Silesia. The inhabitants of this country have to make their choice: either Berlin or Warsaw. Whither will they turn? By far the greater majority of the population of Upper-Silesia are perfectly aware, that the closest possible union with the Polish Republic is entirely to their own interest. The present possessors of this prosperous country with its wealth of coal and iron, try their very utmost to keep this wonderful Upper-Silesia land for Prussia, without being very particular as to the means used for this purpose. The contest for this precious bit of country has begun in deadly earnest. The wealth of Upper-Silesia consists for the greater part of its numerous and rich coal-mines. The coal territory of Upper-Silesia occupies L. 8000 K. m.^{2} The total supply of coal according to the latest statistics (in layers to 30 c. m. thickness) amounts to:

In a depth from	0—1000 m.	86,245	million	tons
„ „ „	1000—1200 „	20,497	„	„
„ „ „	1200—1500 „	22,585	„	„
„ „ „	1500—2000 „	36,660	„	„

together 165.987 million tons.

679933

Of this a total amount of 113.995 million tons can be exported:

In a depth from	0—1000 m.	60,365 million tons	
„ „ „	1000—1200 „	14,460 „	„
„ „ „	1200—1500 „	15,567 „	„
„ „ „	1500—2000 „	23,603 „	„

Out of the total Supply of 166 milliards of tons 113 milliards of tons or 68% are qualified for use. If only the present layers are worked the supply will last about 1200 years, with a yearly production of 50 million tons. Should the yearly production be raised to 75 million tons, the supply will last for another 800 years. Should the layer be worked to the depth of 1500 m. the supply will last for 1600 — 1200 vears. It is for the possession of these rich mines only, that Berlin is engaged in not bitter contest. This present contest is not waged for the people of Upper-Silesia; nor for their workmen, who in the dark subterrenean regions, in daily peril of their lives, search for the black diamonds in order to enrich German capitalists. Before the war in 1913 — according to the data of the "Associated coalery and iron works of Upper Silesia — the Upper-Silesian coal-mines employed 123,394 colliers, raising 43,801,056 tons of coal of the value of 393,664,920 marks. These colliers with few exceptions are Poles, only occasionally small groups of German colliers are to be found.

As well as coal there are found in Upper-Silesia layers of zinc, lead and iron ore. The iron-pits are be-

coming more and more exhausted, so that before long the iron-works in Upper-Silesia will have to depend on foreign import. Should Upper-Silesia be united to the Polish Republic, ample use could be made of the rich iron-pits, which are found not far from the Silesian iron-works in the so-called Congress-Poland. The future development of the iron industry of Upper Silesia in this way would be guaranted because its supply of raw material could be procured under the most favourable conditions.

In the year 1913 only 10 iron-pits were in working order, and 1011 workmen were employed, scarcely 138,204 tons of iron-ore were raised of the value of 917,559 marks.

In like manner, though at a slower rate the zinc- and lead-ore mines, forming the basis of the Upper-Silesian zinc and lead industry seem to be exhausted gradually. In the year 1913, according to the above mentioned statistics, 22 zinc-and lead-mines were in working order, which gave a total supply of 508,404 tons of ore, among which were: 107,787 tons of calamine (zinc spar); 400,387 tons of zinc blende and 52,572 tons of lead-ore. The total value of the production amounted to 36,222,503 marks, the number of workmen to 11,198.

Coal and ore form the basis of the numerous great founderies, and iron-works of Upper-Silesia. In the year 1913—58,736 workmen were employed. In the several industries the number of workmen were the following:

blasting furnaces 5483; iron and steel foundries 3623; iron and steel rolling-mills 19,646; in the so-called iron recasting-works 16,892; in the boiling founderies 2,875; in the raw zinc-works 8,492; in the sheet zinc-rolling works 948 and in the lead works 777.

The iron industry consequently occupied 45,644 workmen, the zinc-lead industry 13,092. The iron industry yielded the immense amount of 309,560,039 marks, the zinc-lead industry 102,362,850 marks.

The total mining industry before the war in 1911 yielded the amount of 798,845,707 marks, employing a powerful army of 191,795 trained workmen, these for the greater part Poles. This army of workmen were merely tools used by German capital, kept in the hands of a small number of capitalistic potentates and joint stock companies, among which the great German bankers in Berlin played the first part.

As well as the iron and lead industries, which form so to say the back-bone of industrial life, there exist in Upper-Silesia still other industrial enterprises, which for the greater part are supplying the wants of the former.

In the district of Oppole and Great-Strzelce are found for instance cement works. In the year 1911—10 cement factories existed here, which produced 3,650,000 tons of cement and employed 2,811 workmen; each factory employing an average number of 281 workmen.

In Upper-Silesia these kind of works are without exception big enterprises all forming joint stock companies. During the war in 1917 nine cement works disposed a share capital of 25,600,000 marks, the gross profits amounted to 12,062,000 marks, the net profits to 4,810,000 marks and in dividends were paid 2,470,000 marks. Expressed in procents the profit of above mentioned year amounted to: gross profits 47,1%, net profits 18,7%, average dividends 10,7%. There were even cement factories which gave an average dividend of 14,4%. There were the gains of the captalists; the workmen, however Poles, without exception had to content themselves with miserable wages.

The same conditions are found in the Upper-Silesian Paper Works, in the Sugar-factories, in the Chemical works, in the Distilleries etc. etc. Here too we find everywhere Polish workmen, doomed to a miserable existence, the German capital, however, invested in these workmen gives great yearly profits, which especially during the war reached quite dizzy heights.

Such is the state of affairs in the Upper-Silesian great industrial plants.

The capital bringing great gain, is in the hands of a few German capitalists, who sweat their industrious Polish workmen.

And do we find better conditions among the peasants of Upper-Silesia? The conditions are here such, that nearly all land is in the hands of great land-owners. In the Polish districts where now the plebiscite must

take place, in the year 1909 were only 258 great land-owners, possessing more than 100 hectares of land on a total area of 509,904 hectares, or 55,62% of the land of the whole districts. This powerful concentration will be shown even more clearly, when mentioning that at that time 286,697 hectares arable land and woods, or 27% of all the districts, or more than one fourth of Polish Upper Silesia was in the possession of only seven land-owners.

Among the 285 big land-owners were found: 62 members of the lesser gentry, 16 barons, 32 counts, 7 princes, two kings (of Saxony and of Würtemberg) and the royal dynasty of Prussia. Each of them separately owned:

Members of the lesser gentry	68,753	hectares
Barons	13,226	„
Counts	117,708	„
Princes	192,617	„
Kings	21,636	„
together . .	419,940	hectares

As 97,431 hectares belonged to the State Treasury it follows, that the 137 land-owners not belonging to the nobility only possessed 73,271 hectares. Nearly half of all the Upper-Silesian country at that time belonged to only 120 members of the nobility and the gentry. Since that time the concentration of land in the hands of a few individual land-owners has been increasing. And who are the workers on these vast estates?

The vast numbers of Polish agricultural labourers and Polish small farmers.

The Polish workmen and the Polish agricultural labourers have been and always will be the supporters of the economical life of the rich Upper-Silesian country. And what was their reward? They have been most brutally treated by German capitalists, in order to raise their dividends and their ground-rents; they have been bent under a double yoke: the capitalistic sweating system, and the systematic oppression of the Polish nationality, both of which suppressed development and civilisation.

The following will be found a sketch of the historical development of the working classes in order to confirm the above mentioned facts, with a special view to the development of the workmen in the mines and metal works of Upper Silesia.

Through the peace treaty of Breslau of the year 1742, which put an end to the war of conquest between the Prussian King Frederic II and Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, the present Upper-Silesia was ceded to Prussia. It must be mentioned, however, that in those days Upper-Silesia (inhabited by a Polish speaking race) was a country covered with forests. The soil was barren and many swamps were found on the right banks of the river Oder. This country made so bad an impression on Frederic II, that he intended—(as proved

by historical documents)—at the peace negociations not to insist at the annexation of Upper-Silesia. However the delegate sent from Berlin to execute this order arrived only the day after the signature of the peace treaty, by which Upper-Silesia was added to Prussia.

At this present historical time — now when the people of Upper-Silesia (consisting for the greater part of the Polish agricultural and industrial working classes) must decide by plebiscite to which nation this country belongs — these lands which from time immemorial have been Polish — the above mentioned fact seems not without its importance. In those earlier times the inhabitants of Upper-Silesia supported themselves mainly by farming. The minerals of the country being then only worked to a small extent.

The mines of *lead* and *silver-ore*, which were worked as early as the 12-th century in the neighbourhood of Bytom and which afterwards were transferred to the district of the mountains of Tarnow, suffered much during the 30 years war and in the year 1738 only 60 workmen were employed in the mines in the mountains of Tarnow.

In the year 1741 there were 15 mines belonging to 9 mining societes. During Prussian times the Frederick mine was founded in Bobrowniki. In the year 1784 the first lead-ore was found here. Two years afterwards a foundry for these metals was erected in Strzebnice ("Königliche Friedrichshütte"), the King Frederick Foundry which exists till the present day.

It is said that in the Tarnowitz district the digging for calamine was begun in the years 1560—1570. Calamine was used only for the making of brass; not till two hundred years afterwards did they begin to extract metallic zinc from the calamine-ore. In the year 1704, a merchant of Breslau, Georg von Giesche, received from the Emperor Leopold the exclusive right for the exploitation of calamine in all Upper-Silesia for the time of 20 years. This act, after being re-inforced several times, was abolished in 1802. At first calamine did not belong to the *regalia*-crown; however in the beginning of the nineteenth century the melting of zinc began and since that time the calamine production has belonged to the crown.

The first zinc-furnace was built by *Ruhberg* in the year 1800 at Wesoła in the district of Pszczyna. In the year 1908/9 was founded in the King's Foundry the zinc-fundry Lydognia with ten furnaces. The production of zinc amounted in the year 1816 to more than 20 thousands centners, in the year 1825 it already was as high as 250 thousands centners. For those times this was an over-production. Added to this was still the competition of the zinc-foundries of Congress-Poland. An effort was made to unite the owners of foundries in a society for the zinc-trade, however without results. In the beginning of the thirties of the last century the zinc production was reduced to 100,000 centners. From the first of January 1830 zinc-foundries were allowed to be built without the permission of the Mining-Board.

From the year 1840 the zinc production rapidly rises. In the year 1850 more than 500 thousand centners were produced; in 1860 more than 800,000 centners. There were 50—60 zinc foundries with 3—4 thousand workmen. Upper-Silesia produced more than 40% of the world's zinc supply. There was a great fluctuation of prices in the zinc-trade. In the year 1811 the value of one ton of raw zinc amounted to 1,125 marks, in the year 1830 on an average it only amounted to 150 mks., afterwards it rose again to more than 400 mks.

IRON. The first furnace was opened in the year 1703 in the Austrian period at Althammer. Others followed. For the smelting processes of the ore charcoal was used. During the Prussian period as yearly as 1753 a state foundry was erected in Ozimek in the midst of the vast woods of the Oppole district. The virst workmen were taken from the Harz, from the district of Mansfeld, from the Saxon and Bohemian Erzgebirge. In order to keep these workmen in the inattractive regions of Oppole, covered with woods and swamps, it was necessary to grant them all kinds of privileges and mitigations. However, notwithstanding all this, they could not remain and ran away. After this failure a state foundry, the Kreuzburg foundry, on the brook of Budkowitz, was founded; in 1786 the foundry of Krascheow; in 1775 the hammer-mill in Jedlice; in 1784 the hammer-mill in Dembo. All of these were state institutions in the district of Oppole.

Before the foundation of the first imperial foundry, the already existing furnaces of Upper-Silesia, 14 in number, produced yearly about 25,000 centners raw-iron, the smaller smelting-and refining-furnaces about 30,000 centners of iron bar, whilst cast-iron was scarcely known; in 1786 when Frederick II died, already 44 furnaces were in working order, producing 165,000 centners of raw-iron. They worked with charcoal, only towards the end of the year 1796 the state foundry in Gliwice *was worked with coke* (this was the first furnace of this kind in Europe). Afterwards the state foundry "King's foundry" was founded; the inauguration of the greater furnace of those times took place on the 25-th of September 1802. In the iron-works of the district of Rybnik, which the state bought from private persons, in 1817 the puddling process was introduced. The building of railways in Prussia and the development of the engine-building connected with it, favourably influenced the iron-industry of Upper-Silesia. During this time were founded or enlarged the greater part of the present iron works: Falva, "Friedens" foundry, "Eintracht", "Baildon" foundry, "Hermina" foundry; "Hugo" foundry, "Hubert", "Donnersmarck", "Julia" foundry, the iron-works in Zawadzkie, etc. The furnaces worked with charcoal could not compete with those worked with coke, and gradually were replaced by them; however, in 1857 there existed in Upper-Silesia, besides 53 furnaces worked with coke still 54 worked with charcoal.

COAL. The first coaleries in Upper-Silesia were founded about the middle of the eighteenth century. About this time we find mentioned a coal-mine in Ruda. In 1754 the mine "Emanuelsegen" near Kostuchna in the district of Pszczyna was founded. The production of all the Upper-Silesian mines in the year 1770 amounted scarcely to 670 tons of coal. In the year 1791 the State mine "Queen Louise" in Zabrze was founded. This-mine towards the end of the 18th century produced about 6,000 tons yearly, from 40—50 workmen were employed. The state mine "King" was opened in 1790; towards the end of the 18th century in the year 1799 already 18 coal-mines were in working order in Upper-Silesia and in New-Silesia (the present Dąbrowa mining region in Congres Poland). They employed 619 workmen, the production amounted to 38,546 tons, with a total value of 111,205 marks. Four of the 18 mines belonged to the Treasury, 2 to the Duke of Pless, the rest was privately owned by German magnates. In the first half of the 19th century the coal industry in Upper-Silesia already had reached such a high degree of development, that besides the State mines there existed in the year 1860 already 81 coaleries belonging to mining societes, employing 10,073 workmen, with a yearly production of 5,907,600 tons.

After the annexation of Upper-Silesia by Prussia, as mentioned above, the Polish inhabitants lived almost exclusively from agricultural labour. Bent under the

double yoke of serfdom and racial oppression, the Polish peasant from early morning to late at night worked and slaved for his German master. The people lived in bondage; without the permission of the lord, the peasant could not leave his village, the peasant-children were compelled to serve long years as servants and valets to their masters. On pain of heavy punishements the peasant had to work with or without his team of horses, on the manorial land. Of the sufferings of these poor wretches several documents of the end of the 18th century give ample proof. Thus we find in the registers of a village in the district of Rybnik the following resolution: "Should horses be wanting the gardeners of the estate will be obliged, when the lord desires *to yoke themselves to the plough* two at a time and plough the fields of their lord". On one of the estates of Count D. a peasant died in perfoming this labour, because the whip had been applied so brutally[1]).

So cruelly the Upper-Silesian peasant was maltreated, that he was put on the same level with horses and cattle! No wonder the learned investigator of peasant-life, in Prussia before the emancipation, Professor *Knapp,* any time he wants to illustrate how terribly the Prussian landlords oppressed their serfs, he always adduces Upper-Silesian examples. In detail these conditions are laid down in a pamphlet by

---

[1]) „Silesian doings before 1806", published in „Schlesische Provinzblatter" of the year 1864, p. 414.

Kaulfersch, which was published anonymously in Dresden in 1786. Here is found how ordinary farmers, whose conditions of life were not so unbearable, had to work 4, 5, nay, even 6 days on manorial land, according to the landlord's pleasure. Because of this over-work on the squire's land they had no time left for their own farming. Especially bad was the condition of the so-called gardeners (i. e., cottagers). Nearly always they were obliged to work, both man and wife all the days of the week on manorial land, getting very small wages, or none at all. "Many of these peasants" says the author— "are conscious of the terrible condition and revolt against it. But when the lanlord threatens them with shutting them up in the dungeon, they often answer: "it is better to sit for ten long years in the dungeon than to serve your lordship..." And this same author writes somewhat further: "They eat the meat of dead or burned cattle, which they dig up from under the dirt with which it is covered and think it a delicate morsel! For the greater part they go barefooted and during the summer they wear a shirt made of sackcloth and short trousers. Even women both young and old, even in the month of October — I saw it myself in the year 1702— go without shirt, only clothed in a bodice and a skirt, and as their bodices cannot be buttoned up, their breasts and body down to the hips are bare. If a peasant dies then he is often buried in a coffin made of boards found on the dung heap".

To what extent serfdom was carried on in those times may be seen from the following taken from the "Oberschlesische Monatschrift" edited in the year 1788 in Grotkow. Among other things we find written: "Very often persons of 20 years or more are taken here for twelve years children".

Very soon the conditions of peasant life were aggravated even to a greater extent, because the Prussian gouvernement, as it had taken posession of the country, quickly began the exploitation of the treasures contained therein. Before long the magnates followed this example and founded different kinds of "works". This activity was encouraged by the Mining Law of the 5th of July 1769, according to which iron-ore and other ores did not belong to the Crown, so that they could freely use it. From this time the conditions of serfdom were more cruel than ever. From this time the Polish peasant slaved on and under the ground; the bailiff goaded him on with a whip, the mining-overseer drove him with a stick to his work. Mines and foundries did not only lay claim to the strength of his body, but also wanted his horses: the ore had to be transported to the refining-forges; iron and zinc had to be carried many a mile, and for many days of the year the peasant had to give his miserable team of horses for this work.

It is true that from Germany, especially from Lower-Silesia, miners and ironfounders were brought, and that settlements were built for them in order to have

professional workmen; the principal part of the working hands, however, belonged always to the Polish serfs. Thus, for example, the peasants serfs of the Crown from the district of Opole (Oppeln) were obliged to transport the ore and wood — only wood was used for fuel, coal being as yet hardly known — for the state works of Ozimek (Malapane) and Kuznice Kluczborskie (Creuzburgehuette). These poor peasants suffered so much, that at last they lost patience. In the year 1761 they revolted. This rebellion, however, was soon suppressed, and the Polish peasants once more bent their shoulders under the heavy yoke.

In private works the conditions were worse. In the districts of Gliwice (Gleiwitz) and Bytom (Beuthen), where the greater part of the industrial plants were in private hands, the peasants revolted in 1790. This rebellion too, was promptly suppressed by military force.

An industrial working class in the strict sense of the word did scarcely exist at those times; the principal force of the workmen were the serfs legally chained to the place of their birth.

Schumell mentions the conditions of wages in Upper-Silesia at those times: "He—viz. the serf—puts his miserable team of horses to the waggon, drives $2^1/_2$ miles [1]) to the mine, fills the waggon with his shovel. then drives to the works, unloads the ore and gets for all this labour 8 silvers pennies. Thus he has walked three miles [2]) afoot, for which he surely ought to receive six sil-

[1]) That is, som thing like twelve English miles.
[2]) Fifteen English miles.

ver pennies, and for the unloading another two. And what remains for the horses? And yet Upper-Silesian peasant is content with such a life! (?!) Can this be called laziness, and would the Lower Silesian drive his waggon for eight silver pennies a day, let alone the work and the walking?"

These words of an eye-witness are very characteristic, and show the small needs and the low wages of the Upper-Silesian peasants of those times.

Another witness describes the housing conditions of those times (1790) with the following words: "A single room serves in winter for a numerous family; the half-naked children and old men only clothed with trousers, are an offence to modesty; in the greatest friendship with the family live calves and pigs; also are here to be found their whole supply of potatoes and other vegetables. Such hovel offers the saddest aspect of poverty, dirt and slovenliness. And in this room, in this fetid air, the family lives on the most meagre fare, and is happy and healthy. Brandy is the idol they worship".

The first half of the nineteenth century.

We now come to the new century. The influence of the French Revolution, penetrating everywhere and creating, throughout Silesia, an ever-increasing discontent among the peasants — this influence, coupled with the defeat at Jena, forced the Prussian Government to abolish serfdom.

A whole series of edicts was published. But the Up-

per-Silesian magnates at the head of whom was the count Henckell von Donnersmarck had such a great influence at court, that the Upper-Silesian peasant once more was victimised. The abolishment of serfdom in reality was the edict of his expropriation. The greater part of his land was taken from him. To such an extent was land taken from the Upper-Silesian peasant, that nowhere in the East-Prussian provinces (Pomerania excepted) estates grew so large. The landowners in the Upper-Silesia became great and mighty lords by robbing the Polish peasants whilst allowing them to be henceforth free. The consequences of the so-called Land Reform was the making of the Upper-Silesian farmer into a cottager with an insufficient bit of land. There was no notion of giving the peasants enough land to keep a family on. Moreover the free disposition of the land in case of heritage reduced the land to ever smaller parcels: in increasing numbers the cottagers entered the ranks of the entirely landless labourers. Thus, a surplus of labourers arose, consequently wages were very low, and the rate of living of the workmen was low too. The agricultural inquiry made by order of the government in the year 1848 showed that among all the eastern provinces of Prussia the one where the lowest wages for agricultural labour were paid was Upper-Silesia.

The conditions under which the Upper-Silesian population had to live were truly desparate. The friend of Karl Marx, *Wilhelm Wolff* describes these conditions in gloomy colours.

Here we find: "Once more hunger and its ally typhus are ravaging these districts, which already so dreadfully suffered the year before. Even the squires' and usurers' Diet of Berlin with great condescension uttered some philantropic consolations regarding the districts of Rybnik and Pless...

...„The hunger raging in Upper-Silesia, the tyhus epidemics as a consequence are by no means caused by the climate, the bad crops, or the floods. The climate of these districts is healthy, there were neither bad crops nor floods. Hunger and epidemics are the unavoidable consequences of the shameless management of the robber-barons, of the "dead hand", of the management of the domains, of the indifference of the Government, which with perfect unconcern looked upon everything which did not come into conflict with the threefold holy Prussian Landrecht, everything which did not interfere with the peace and comfort of the Christan-teutonic class of officials. The land is for the greater part in the hands of the big land-owners, of the "dead hand" and of the State. Only $^2/_5$ of the land belong to the farmers, and this land is heavily encumbered by socage and rent due to the land-owner, by heavy government taxes, church taxes, school-taxes, district-taxes, and community taxes. The high-born lords, however, when compared with the farmers, pay only a trifling part of the government taxes. The small $^2/_5$ of the districts are tilled by nearly three times as many hand as the remaining parts. The farmer, without capital and without know-

ledge, tills his field but poorly, and the large properties of 35 — 60,000 acres are often badly cultivated from lack of labourers, lack of scientific management and lack of care. The magnate, who enjoys life in the capital, is a traveller and a visitor of wateringplaces, and does not care whether his fields are cultivated well. His property is huge, consequently his income is derived from: fields, meadows, ponds, woods, mines, sheep - folds, distilleries etc.; add to this that he pays but small government taxes, whilst he draws big rents from leased estates, from peasants' holdings etc., and the result is that in normal times he cannot spend his income even if he does his best to squander it...

"On the other side we find the most bitter misery among the masses. If a labourer gets from 5—6 silver pennies, a woman from $2^1/_2$ to 3 silver pennies, such wages are already looked upon as high. They live exclusively on potatoes and brandy; and even these are sometimes wanting, and hunger and typhus occur. When a disease in the potatoes caused a failure in the crops and the prices of their only victuals were raised, these unfortunate peasants began to live on broth cooked from roots, herbs and stolen hay, and on corpses of animals which had perished from diseases. Their strength dwindled away. The brandy was higher in price and worse in quality. The innkeeper, generally a Jew, who for a fabulous sum of money had rented the inn and sold the bad brandy of the high-born lord, and already long since in order to pay his high rent and

pocket his not unconsiderable gains, had the custom to dilute and add several ingredients to the brandy, one of the principal of these ingredients being vitriol. This poisoning of the people already had been customary from times immemorial, but when the year of the failure of the potatoe crops came it flourished more than ever. The peasants weakened by their broths of herbs could not digest this medicine any longer. Small wonder then, that such conditions together with insufficient clothing, badly aired rooms, frost and bad wages caused hunger and as in Ireland a typhus epidemic". The force of resistance of these people was broken. By this everything is explained. „The robber-barons and the Government had so persistently drained the very life-blood from these people, that they could not but perish. if the Government and the robber-barons did not help them. And what help was given them was proved amply by the thousands of dead and dying carried away in this current of misery. The robber-knights, the officials and the whole Blessed Government clique enriched themselves, took big salaries, distributed gratifications, built palaces, whilst down there in the depths people were starving and dying from epidemic diseases like dumb cattle. Not much better is the fate of the small farmers, that is those, who have a hut and some bit of land. They also live for the greater part on potatoes and brandy; they must sell the products of their fields in order to be able to pay their government taxes and the taxes to the landowner. The breeding of hogs, which used to bring in some money had to cease

because of the failure of the potatoe crops. The peasant had not enough potatoes for his own family! Added to all this was still the compulsory service he had to make, not seldom accompanied by the lashings of the whip of his lordship or the inspector. Thus working and starving he was bound a slave to the wealthy landowner and the insolent official. This was and is yet the fate of the Polish population in Upper-Silesia. The farmer, by his compulsory labour prevented from cultivating his own fields, lacking both capital and knowledge, neglects his farm. In many districts his crops are destroyed by multitudes of game, carefully kept by the great land-owners".

Small wonder that the hunger-typhus, which raged towards the end of 1847 and the first part of 1848, made unheard-of ravages among the Polish population in Upper-Silesia. Most victims fell in the distrct of Pszczyna (Pless) and Rybnik, every tenth man of the population was killed. Dr. Abarbanell in his essay entitled "A word about the typhus epidemic at the end of May 1848" (Gleiwitz 1848) gives a full description of this period.

The revolutionary struggles in Berlin in the month of March 1848 gradually spread from province to province in Prussia and of course found a fertile soil in the Upper - Silesian village, where the starving Polish population had its abode. Against all sorts of "most noble" princes and counts, against the few German landlords in

Upper Silesia, against their oppressing and exploiting, the hate of the destitute Polish villagers in Upper-Silesia was directed; but this hate also attacked the representatives of the Government, the Prussian officials. On different parts of the country revolts broke out caused by the sad agricultural conditions. Everywhere this revolts were suppressed by military force. In the district of Kluczbork (Kreuzburg) a state of siege was declared because of the revolt. For the defence of the shameless horde of robber-barons, as Wolff called them, military force was of course ready at the first call.

The agrarian revolts of 1848 in Silesia which were most violent in the Polish districts of Upper-Silesia resulted in the regulation by Government of the relations between hut and manor. On the 20-th December 1848 a Provisional Edict was issued about the agrarian conditions in Upper-Silesia, checking the worst unjust claims of the robber-barons on the poor peasants, whilst enabling the latter to get gradually rid of socage duties, rents and payments of all sort due to the landlords.

The result of the whole agrarian reform of Upper-Silesia was the forming of a proletariat of the Polish peasant population. The rapidly growing industry of Upper-Silesia, which after the building of the first railway in the middle of the forties of the last century made rapid progress found ample use for this proletariat. This was a fact of great importance; the peasant la-

bourer with his exceedingly low standard of living became, when entering the mines, a most easy prey to exploitation. Docile and humble, he suffered without complaint the bad conditions of his new place of work. Moreover the employer was generally the same magnate for whom he had not long before been working as peasant labourer on his estate. In the infancy of industry it were chiefly the great aristocratic landlords who built foundries and started mines, whilst the working hands came from their villages. Consequently the customs of the Upper-Silesian village were transferred into the sphere of industrial labour: the goading on with the whip, the starvation wages, the forcing to work, of not only men, but even of women and children, were the same as when peasants did compulsory labour on manorial land. Shortly, the feudalism of the Upper-Silesian village was transported to the foundries and mines.

What were the conditions of the industrial workers during this period? "Regarding the housing conditions we find in the report of the Mining Board of Tarnowskie Góry (Tarnowitz) of the 4th of January 1818 the following: "When a miner at a distance of half a mile*) from Zabrze has rented a miserable hovel with one unpaved room, nearly without light, for himself, his family and his cattle, when he must look for fuel himself and daily in all kinds of weather must trudge along the bad roads, yet he very seldom likes

*) 2½ English miles.

to change for a better and nearer lodging in one of the settlement houses at Male Zabrze (Klein Zabrze), where his fuel costs him next to nothing. What is the reason of this? He cannot do as he likes in such a house, he is not allowed to bury his cabbage and potatoes in his room, he may not keep his cattle there, in a word these flats are for him too good". From this report clearly is shown with how little the Upper-Silesian workman of those days was satisfied; he was content with a hovel for himself and his cattle.

In an essay of the year 1840 we find the following description of the conditions in the different industries: "In foundries and mines beating of the workmen is of common occurrence and is a standing rule. The work is made in 12 hours sets. When one set has finished the workmen get drunk and often do not return at the appointed time. After pay-day they are drunk for some days, sometimes for a whole week. The official in the "works" has no other means of making himself respected and of obtaining uninterrupted work than using corporeal punishment. (?!) Brandy is another and gentler means but it is found that its effect too soon turns into the reverse". That is the way in which the workmen are treated by their employers! The unknown author of this essay continues as follows: "On Sundays women and children are taken to the public house, where the latter from their babyhood have been accustomed to the most brutal sights. To the shrill music of a cracked violin, the people whirl in a crazy dance in the narrow

room. A penny candle standing on a beer barrel throws a flicketing light on the scene. Now and again when one of the topers takes the candle to light his pipe the room is in darkness. Those who are dancing are shrieking madly in their mirth, those who sit around are singing loudly. No brandy bottle is ever left empty, and as to this the women and children, too, have not been forgotten. The fumes of the bad brandy soon mount to the heads of the people. Soon a quarrel ensues, which, with mathematical certainty, ends in blows. The publican, either by persuasion or by physical force, throws the whole company out. And so ends the usual Sunday festivity".

The fiftieth of the former century.

Many witnesses, whose social and political position exclude a too unfavourable view of the conditions of labour and industry procure us with ample material about the period of the fiftieth of the last century. The annals of the conservative newspaper "Schlesische Zeitung", edited in Breslau, in many contributions from the district of Bytom depict the sad state of affairs in the foundries and mines of that time. The same opinions we find expressed in the writings of the Government Assessor *Selger* and the Government Councillor *Schueck.*

The smelting industry already had been developed to such an extent that in what was then the district of Bytom, comprising the present districts of Katowice (Kat-

towitz), Bytom (Beuthen), Zabrze and Tarnowskie Góry (Tarnowitz), in the year 1857 not less than 29.127 workmen were already occupied in the mines and foundries and different industries connected with them. However, not only men, also women and children were used by the capitalists. Selger estimates their number to be 2600 in the district of Bytom, and Schueck writes, that there are "very many of them".

What about the wages of those times as described by the above mentioned authors? According to the official reports mentioned by Schueck wages in the year 1858 in the district of Bytom for miners amounted from 12—15 silver pennies a day; in the district of Rybnik from $7^1/_2$—12 silver pennies; in Pszczyna (Pless) 8—15 silver pennies. In 1859, a crisis from over-production took place in the iron industry, and wages fell. According to the Upper-Silesian Society of Owners of Mines and Foundries the lowest wages then were: for the digger 9—11 silver pennies, for the carrier 6—10 silver pennies, for other categories even less; for instance, boys scarcely received 4 silver pennies.

Neither were the workmen of the other mines and foundries better paid. The zinc worker in the district of Bytom received from 5—14 silver pennies a day. The better skilled workmen in the rolling-mills were paid from 12 silver pennies to 2 talers (1 taler = 30 silver pennies); the men at the blast-furnaces received from 13 to 22 silver pennies. In other districts, however,

these wages were considerably lower. In the district of Lubliniec (Lublinitz) the average payment was in the iron-mines 5 silver pennies, in the foundries 10—15 silver pennies, in the factories 5—6 silver pennies a day; in the district of Pszczyna (Pless) were paid in the foundries 6—15 silver pennies, ordinary labourers got 6—7 silver pennies, factory hands 6—8; in the district of Rybnik in the foundries from 10 silver pennies to 1 taler was paid; in the district of Wielkie-Strzelce (Gross-Strelitz) in the foundries and factories the men took average wages of $6^{3}/_{4}$ silver pennies, the women 4; in the district of Gliwice in the ore mines and foundries the wages were from 8—25 silver pennies, in the factories from 15—20.

These low wages were dependent on the still lower wages of the agricultural labourers. In 1858, according to official reports, the peasant labourer in the district of Lubliniec was paid 5—6 s. p. a day, and women $2^{1}/_{2}$—4 s. p.; in the district of Wielkie Strzelce men earned daily 6 s. p., and women 4; in the district of Pszczyna: men 5—6 s. p., women 4—5 s. p.; in the district of Rybnik the average wages were 3—10 s. p.; in the district of Bytom 10 s. p.; in the district of Gliwice men earned in winter 5—6 s. p., in summer from 8—20 s. p., women in winter $2^{1}/_{2}$—5 s. p., in summer from 4 — 6 s. p.

Solger distinguishes two kinds of workmen: skilled and unskilled The unskilled workmen are without any profession, they take to all kinds of work. They

have no great demands. Solger says of them: "What they earn, they use. Only a small part of them tried to lay by some money. They are absolutely without discipline, brutal, dissolute and often criminal". The skilled labourers are professionals. According to their different professions they form certain groups more or less characteristic. The miners take the foremost place among these. What are their labour conditions? They are working in the mines day and night. The working time of one set lasts 12 hours. They are changed every week. In the calamine mines they are working 8 hours. Night work is required only when urgent orders have to be executed. The second group is formed by the foundry workers. Their work also lasts 12 hours. They work in a day set and a night set. The conditions of the zinc-workers are very hard. Solger says, that they very often get rheumatism and lung-disease. The unhealthy conditions in which they pass their lives cause them to die at about 45 years of age.

Pay-day is once a month. This day is distinguished by an increased number of drunken people. The workers buy several "necessary and unnecessary" things. Solger, describing such a pay-day, shows great generosity towards the workmen by writing: "We cannot grudge white bread and sausages to the workman who has worked a whole month by the sweat of his brow, but it is not to be believed what useless trifles these people buy, when they have some money in their pockets. The dirty and coal blackened workmen buy

pomade, and rub the whole portion at once in their uncombed hair! Not content with ordinary food and bent on making a feast for his family, the workman buys sausages and cakes. In short, these people frequently act as if they had lost their senses... they are like children stretching out their hands for glittering things, they crave for all kinds of enjoyments, without a thought for the morrow... Till the next pay-day the workman is forced to live on credit, which is readily given to him in proportion to his expected wages. The innkeeper is the most important person for the workman, he gives credit and brandy, naturally in such a way that the workman is heavily indebted to him... That, with such a manner of living, many workmen are unable to keep an orderly household, goes without saying. And from this demoralization unavoidably ensues".

This was the impression got of the Upper-Silesian workmen by a man, who for years could observe them personally. From Solger's description of the conditions of wages may be seen that the wages were extremely low. The miners worked by contract. On pay-day the powder oil and tools were subtracted from their gains. Why? And Solger answers: "Workmen must buy such things, because if they get them gratis, they might be cheating".

In those days the main principle of the mining rules consisted in the so-called compulsory superintendence. Only the State Mining Board had the right to engage or dismiss workmen; the owner of the mine or factory

had no voice in these things. Management and supervision of the mines were also in the hands of the State Mining Board. In general there was, in every respect, a system of strict State control, quite in accordance with the views of the time, but absolutely insufficient for the requirements of the industries. Especially the owners of mines resented this legislation, which did not allow them to have an unlimited supply of the treasures hidden in the earth, and to enrich themselves at the cost of the workman. From the part of the mine-owners a strong opposition was carried on, aiming at a change in the mining laws in favour of the industrial capitalists. In 1851, part of the management of the mines was given to the owners, then the principle of governmental supervision was given up, and at last the so-called "free bargaining for labour" was introduced. Three years afterwards, by the Miners' Insurance Law of the year 1854, the administration of the insurance funds, till this time in the hands of the State Mining Board, also passed to the employers. Still some protective laws remained in force. However, in the year 1861, the Government at the instigation of the owners for the greater part abolished these laws. And at last in 1865, the mine-owners were satisfied for the rest of their claims. The Mining Law of this year did away with the last restrictions: the owners of the mines had all the mineral treasures at their disposal, the scanty exceptions which the law still maintained were put aside by practice. The "free bar-

gaining for labour" was the leading principle. At those times the principle of free competition was thought to be able to work wonders and do away with all social evils. These hopes were not realised. Unfettered free competition without any restrictions proved to be fatal to the general welfare. In Upper-Silesia the Polish workmen fell victims to the most shameless exploitation and oppression.

Up to that time wages had been regulated every year by the State Mining Board. Mining being, in theory, a royalty, the State protected the workmen both against an excessive cutting-down of the wages and against unemployment. Now all this ceased. With what result, we will see later on.

According to Solger in the year 1858 a cutter earned in a coal mine for 300 working days 160 talers a year, a carrier 108 talers. In the calamine mines the wages of a hewer amounted to 130 talers yearly (the year reckoned as 300 working days), of a carrier 98 talers, women 65 talers and children 50 talers. In the iron-mines wages were still lower: the hewers could earn in 300 working days 109 talers, the carriers 88 talers, women and children 55 talers. In the zinc-works the smelters could earn for 365 (!?) working days 193 talers, the men working in the muffles in 300 working days 182 talers and the pullers 164 talers. At the blast-furnaces for 365 (!?) working days the smelters earned 228 talers, the fillers 169 talers, the furnace men 125 talers, the moulders for 300 working days 211

talers, the stokers 149 talers, women and children 70 talers. In the rolling-works in 300 working days puddlers earned 198 talers, foremen 266 talers, "rear-rank men" 204 talers, loose workmen 90 talers, locksmiths 191 talers, and black-smiths 189 talers.

According to Solger the workman to support a family of from 3 to 4 persons, needed yearly 143 talers and 12 silver pennies in the coal mining districts; and in the zinc and iron mines districts 120 talers 12 silver pennies. It can be therefore seen how insufficient were the wages of the majority of the working men.

Regarding housing conditions Solger remarks as follows: "More than half of the permanent workmen live in extremely miserable conditions. Though more houses are being built—we read in Silger—in 1855 even 1,096 new houses, among which many detached houses for one family each, yet there are still more people present than can be lodged in the existing houses. The majority of them are small huts, only big enough to accomodate 5 persons. Consequently lodgings are overcrowded to the detriment of health, especially in those places, where there is a great demand for workers, and a number of the lowest working class wander roofless... In summer there is room enough in brick-yards, anger-holes and cornfields; at that time of the year, you may count such homeless people by thousands. In winter those who do not return to their native places, sleep near the zinc-foundries on the reeking scoria, or at the lime-kilns and at the burning spots of

the mines, anywhere where they can find a refuge from the cold, and though ten times driven away, they ten times return. Sometimes some of them are stifled or burned to death, but the rest return to the same night lodgings". The housing conditions of the loose workmen are still worse. "They are often found with wife and children, in low clay-huts like caves, which during rainy weather are filled with mud, and during the warm season with choking hot air. Scurvy and other infectious diseases were the consequence of such conditions. The employers, however, cared little about these people, whose strength they used. Here was to be found a model of European slavery". If this author, who cannot be suspected of biassed pessimism, has shown us such a gloomy picture of life, we may be sure that in reality these conditions were even worse.

The industry made such a progress that the demand for labour was greater than the supply, therefore workmen were sought in the neighbouring districts even in Congress Poland. Schück estimates the number of these immigrant workmen at 40,000 persons.

It was of importance for the industry to have a greater number of permanent workmen, dependent on the owners of the works. For this purpose workmens' houses were being built in a great hurry. Schück says that towards the end of 1857 there were already 641 of these houses, containing 3,366 lodgings for 15,000 persons. Also all kinds of funds were started, sick-funds, pensioners' funds, and relief-funds. The regulations of

these funds, however, were such as to give small advantage to the workmen and making them altogether dependent on the employers. In the administration of these funds the managers of the industrial establishments, of course, had the decisive power.

In the coal-mines, already as early as the year 1769 a Mutual Insurance Founds (the so-called Knappschaft) existed. As to such factories as were not subject to superintendence by the State Mining Board, there the basis for founding Invalidity and Old Age Insurance Funds was the law of April 3rd, 1854. In 1858 there were already 74 of such funds with 15,528 members. They took higher payments from their members than did the Knappschaft, namely, as a rule, 1 silver penny from every taler earned. The position of the employers was, in this connection, a privileged; only in case of necessity they had to add 50% to the sum total paid in by the workmen. The management of these funds was in the hands of a board, generally consisting of none but employers. Alongside this board, there was a workingmen's committee with but subsidiary functions. The real control was in the hands of the employers, and all depended on them. Also, the rules of these funds were formed in such a way that, f. i., the amount of relief-money was fixed by the board of management, according to the degree of "dignity" of the receiver. In connection with the rules of the several insurance funds there existed rules fixing the order in the workingmen's family houses and the fines for infringing on this order.

Admission to work and to the Insurance Funds was conditional on agreeing to these rules. Even at the present day such regulations are inconvenient for the workmen, 60 years ago they could not have been better. The fines deducted from the wages in accordance with these rules were added to the relief-funds.

From this time dates the foundation of the Upper-Silesian Society of Owners of Mines and Fundries, an organisation of employers, which at present has enormous power over the workmen. This organisation was founded in 1854, that is to say, at a time when the workmen could not think of forming their own organisation for the struggle against the all-powerful capitalists, as they only obtained the right of coalition in the year 1869. The organisation of workmen in Upper-Silesia was considerably preceded by the organisation of the captalists.

The low level of culture is also remarked upon by Solger. "The greater part of the population, namely, the working classes are poor, yet in their poverty they have extremely small exigencies. They are content when they can appease their hunger to some extent by potatoes and meal broth. It is only recently that bread has also become a common food. The exhausting labour in the wet mines and before the hot furnaces, hardens the body of the workmen to such an extent, that even in winter he does not want much clothing. The children, as soon as they are left to their own resources, and this is done very early, run about, in summer, clad at the

best in dirty little shirts, in winter somewhat better, thus from an early age they get accustomed to heat, cold and dampness. It is often admirable what these people endure in this respect, especially when one considers on what a scanty pittance they live. When pay-day at last arrives all troubles are forgotten, the workmen, who are living by the day, often in one day squander more than they spent during a whole month".

Bad food, hard work and small wages were the causes of the degenaration of the working classes both in body and mind. Solger states that at those times a family of the working classes consisted of 4 persons at most. "The reason of this — he says — is not the ow number of births, but the high death-rate of children, especially infants. Bad lodgings, lack of air, food and care is the cause".

Afterwards child-labour arrested the bodily development of the children. We find a curious passage referring to this in Solger: "As soon as they are able to work, the father often takes the children to help him. Neither in the mines, nor in the foundries the children are counted as youthful workers, in accordance with the law of 1853, they do not get any wages, they are only private assistants of their fathers. True, the law only permitted to employ youthful workpeople from their 16th year onward, but before this age they were working without pay; they were only "private assistants", consequently everything was in order. The unpaid labour brought gain and regulations were not bro-

ken! For small wages father and child worked together. The employer had his reasons to be satisfied!

The first strike in the Upper-Silesian mining and foundry industry took place — as far as I know — in the year 1859. As a consequence of the crisis wages had to be lowered. In the zinc-foundry "Silesia" in Lipiny about the middle of July wages were reduced from 13½ to 11 silver pennies for a shift, which gave rise to great discontent among the workmen. Two hundred discontented foundry workmen stopped work and are said to have been of a "menacing and threatening attitude". The strikers were joined by workmen from Katowice (Kattowitz), Welnowiec (Hohenlohehütte), Rozdzien (Rosdzin), Zabrze and other places. Occasional street riots took place, some of the factories were damaged and some policemen were wounded or beaten. The governor of the district ordered a squadron of lancers from Gliwice, and soon "order was restored".

Half a century ago.

Let us imagine conditions half a century ago. The mining industry developed with American speed. The number of coal mines, iron mines and zinc and lead ore mines was growing; the iron, zinc and lead foundries were greatly enlarged, and ever-increasing was the number of the wage-slaves, who, for a wretched pay by toilsome labour created colossal wealth. Coal and coke from Upper Silesia was found everywhere; and the zinc produced in Upper Silesia was sold all over the world. These great mining

industries had their seat principally in what was then the Bytom district. In 1867 the total number of workmen was 33,174, in 1869 this number increased to 53,224. The milliards of the French contribution, which troughout Germany provoked a period of wild speculation, also made their influence felt in Upper Silesia. In 1873 the mines and foundries of Upper Silesia occupied 66,299 workmen. Within six years the number of miners and smelters had been doubled. The crash caused by the over-production fell with all its weight on Upper Silesia. In 1879 the number of workmen suddenly decreased to 62,190, then followed hard times and not till 8 years afterwards did the number of workmen rise (in 1881) as high as 68,880, this number being only $2^1/_2$ thousand more than in 1873. The Upper Silesian proletariat learnt to the fullest extent, what a crisis in the capitalistic world means for a poor working man!

The official reports of those times show us a dreadful picture of the conditions of the industrial workmen in Upper Silesia. It is worth while to bring to light these reports hidden in old unwieldy volumes covered by library dust.

Les us take up first the report about the health conditions in the district of Opole (Oppeln) from the year 1871 to 1875.

This small district of three and a half square miles*)was inhabited by 223.710 persons. Especially the

---

*) $31^1/_2$ English square miles.

present districts of Bytom, Katowice and Zabrze were densely populated. In the district of Bytom the density of the population on one square mile amounted to 44.702 persons, in Katowice 26.581, in Zabrze 21.149. The housing conditions were in a very sad state here. The average inhabitants of one house amounted to:

In the district of Bytom 21,71 in the year 1871, 23,36 in 1875
„ „ „ „ Katowice 17,04 „ „ „ „ , 17,50 „ „
„ „ „ „ Zabrze 14,73 „ „ „ „ , 15,48 „ „

Whilst in the whole province of Opole in 1871 an average number of 9.23 person were living in one house, in 1875—9,53. In the industrial centre the working people were squeezed together like herrings in a barrel. The most crowded houses were found in Bytom.

"At the first glance, says Dr. Pistor, there seems to be the greatest prosperity in the industrial districts, but this is deceiving; side by side with the enormous wealth of the owners is found the greatest poverty and the most painful misery. The poverty and misery of the numerous workmen was a hotbed for all kinds of epidemic diseases. "Upper-Silesia — says Dr. Pistor— is well-known as a place where all kinds of typhus fever flourish; in most of the districts these diseases are found owing to the density of population and the bad housing conditions. In the former district of Bytom, however, the most favourable conditions of epidemic diseases are to be found, here generally may be found either cholera, small-pox, or one of the different forms of typhus". To confirm these words we only have to

mention that the cholera epidemy of 1874 claimed the greatest number of victims in the industrial districts. In the whole province of Opole were more than 2,496 cases of cholera; 1744 of these were found in the former district of Bytom, more than $^2/_3$ of the total cases. In the whole district of Opole 1,274 persons died of this epidemy, 859 of whom belonged to former district of Bytom. It follows from the above that most of the persons falling victims to this frightful epidemy were found among the ranks of industrial labour. No wonder, for the food of these people was bad, and by no means sufficient for the hard labour in mines and foundries.

According to the writings of Dr. Pistor, in Upper-Silesia the workingmen and the peasants, — the sons of the latter migrating to the industrial districts — in the poorer districts live on: "potatoes, fermented cabbage, butter-milk, bread and brandy; brandy being in great favour with women, children and even with infants". Meat is eaten but rarely, the pig that is reared by the workmen himself is the only meat to be had. The houses were bad, very bad. "Squeezed together in small lodgings, the small windows looking on dirty courtyards — says Dr. Pistor — the proletariat are living, even the poorer artisans live in such lodgings, especially in the towns, Opole not making an exception". The worst lodgings in those times were to be found at Krolewska Huta (Königshütte) and in Myslowice. Also very bad were the housing conditions in the industrial district. Exceptionally bad lodgings were found in: Swientochlo-

wice, Lipiny, Chropaczow (Schlesiengrube), but the worst lodgings of all was the Communal House which belonged to the owners of the Fanny mine near Huta Laura (Laurahütte). In 1874 this building, surrounded by dirt and rubbish on all sides, served as a home for 130 persons; these people had among them only a single W. C., so that the aspect of this court-yard can not be put into words. The building is two-storied, made of wood, without a cellar, all the spare places overfilled. During the inspection of the Sanitary Board tools, coal, wood, potatoes, vegetables, etc. were found in the corridors of the first floor, so that the entrance to the rooms was blocked up, because places for storing such articles did not exist. "The living-rooms have generally only one window, they are dirty, over-crowded, without any conveniences. They are heated by small iron stoves, which also serve as cooking-ranges. We could not make sure whether the rooms were used only by married couples and their children, or whether they had also lodgers. In the greater number of the rooms (each at most 800 cubic feet large), lived 4 to 6 persons. It is superfluous to say anything on the atmosphere in such a room. Fortunately there is no well in the court-yard".

During the following 5 years the housing conditions in the industrial district did not improve, as the second report by the same Medical Councillor Dr. Pistor shows. He says: "The condition of the houses have not

altered much. Only the great works during the last years have, in many cases, spent considerable sums to lodge their workmen, and have built good and yet cheap houses, each for 6 to 12 families. The rent, according to the situation of the house, varies from 54—120 marks yearly". However the Doctor speaks about very bad lodgings too, such as were to be found at the Turza (Thurze) foundry belonging to Guido von Henckel-Donnersmarck in Swierklaniec (Neudeck): rooms which were too damp for keeping the muffles there, were given as living rooms to the workmen. No better were the housing-conditions at the Glauber foundry and in many others.

Dr. Pistor specially emphasizes the conditions arising from the system of sub-renting, or taking in boarders. Dr. Pistor writes: "A family, with 5 or 6 children, living in a single room, or with an alcove added, takes in boarders and lodgers, from 1—6 persons, generally of the male sex, from 16—40 years of age. These boarders sleep on the floor, or on a large box, or on straw-mattresses, or lay in bed with their clothes dirty from the work in the foundries or the mines. One must see with one's own eyes to be fully convinced, that overcrowding leads, in these cases, to a serious hygienical danger as well as to a derision of morality. Young men, married women and their grown-up daughters sleep near each other or side by side. Nay, frequently, when accepting a sub-lodger, it was tacitly agreed that there

night be intimacy between him and the landlady's daughters, provided he was no niggard and gave money or presents".

It is evident that in this way a terrible demoralisation of the people occurred. But this was not all. "The crowding together of so many persons in these narrow, dirty rooms" — continues Dr. Pistor — "makes such places the hot-beds of infectious diseases, which is proved by the fact, that the spotted fever during the winter of 1876—77 did not cease; in these rooms death found a rich harvest". Also cholera, in these lodgings found the most fertile soil. Moreover syphilis and scabies spread from these houses, where moral precepts are trampled upon. There are cases known, when mother and daughter were pregnant in the same year from the same sublodger. Boys of 17 and 15 years were infected with syphilis by female workers lodging with the family etc.

The housing conditions are particularly bad in the zinc-foundry districts. How bad the conditions are here, what misery in this industry is reigning follows, according to Dr. Pistor, from the places where the hot ashes and cinders fall in the basaments, being used as dwellings because of their warmth by people who either do not know anything about poisonous vapours, or else do not mind them. The taking shelter in these places had already been prohibited by the police regulations of the 7th of August 1855, because of the danger, and the owners of foundries had been warned not

to allow the workmen to live in those places. Yet the Bytom District Physician Dr. Herz still found, whilst inspecting the works at night, such places used as lodgings as late as 1871, at the George and Theresa foundries; the author himself found the same in 1871 at Lipiny, and District Physician Dr. Färber found, in the same year, eight or ten such rooms, at the Turza foundry, furnished as lodgings. Of course, the families living there had to leave, and the places were locked up. The above mentioned conditions are partly the consequence of the lack of houses, owing to the rapid increase of the population, partly they exist because the Housing Inspection is insufficient, and lastly they are owed to the indifference of the population, who, accustomed to disorder and dirt, do not care for clean and decent lodgings.

Thus, though police regulations were not lacking on paper, there were no efforts to get them observed. So we need not wonder that owners of the foundries did not trouble to look after decent dwellings for their workmen. It is true that boarding-houses were being built, procuring night-lodgings for the unmarried workmen, who, however, did not make use of these houses. Dr. Pistor writes about these places: "The night-lodgings built by the mining societies are not very much frequented; so f. i., in the night-lodgings at Zabrze where was room for 200 beds, only 80 persons at most were staying. The unmarried workmen prefer to sleep as sub-lodgers in the families of their married comrades.

The police regulations of the 27th of November 1865 did not put a stop to these bad habits, for though their clauses were quite conveniently drawn, yet as a rule they were not, and are not, enforced".

About the bad food-conditions of the workmen we find a description in a third report about the health conditions in the district of Opole, written by dr. Noack. He says, that "after the reports of the official veterinary, surgeon Schilling, it frequently happens in the industrial district that if cattle is killed because of disease, or if diseased cattle dies from itself and is buried, they as a rule are dug up during the night and consumed by the poor".

Could a population living in such conditions, which were an outrage to civilisation, attach great importance to cleanliness? "Such an accumulation of dirt, as was found in the industrial district, especially at the Godula foundry at the time of the cholera in 1874, is probably not easy to be found elsewhere". The dung-hole is in the immediate vicinity of the well, and it lacks any arrangement preventing the water from flowing into it; closets are often entirely wanting. But all this would still not matter much, for these are defects more or less to be found everywhere. But such dung-holes had not been emptied for more than a year, they were literally overflowing, and this not only in small villages inhabited by poor cottagers but also in a big foundry workers' settlement counting 3,000 inhabitants, which belongs to one of the largest estates in the district. This,

probably, could not so easily be found elsewhere. What can one expect of peasants, artisans, or cottagers, who live in such conditions!"

This is the description given of the Upper-Silesian industrial districts by Dr. Pistor. Dr. Noack does not speak of them more favourably: "It is true that dirt everywhere in the world is the natural consequence of poverty and as such can be excused, but I do not think, that the want of cleanliness in the lives of the workmen in any other province of Prussia is so startling as in this (viz. the Upper Silesian) province."

The Upper-Silesian magnates enriched themselves, enjoyed every kind of comfort, lived in magnificent castles, whilst by their side the ant-hill-like multitude of Polish workingmen lived almost on the level of barbarians! The Upper-Silesian industrial district, drawn more and more into the whirl of great capitalistic industry, showed conditions similar to those in which the English workman lived at the dawn of capitalism in England and which are described in such drastic colours by Friedrich Engels in his well-known work.

No wonder that the outcome of these conditions, which were so frightful in every respect, was more or less a repetition of that, which had happened in Upper-Silesia, and particularly in the Pszczyna (Plus) and Rybnik districts, during the hunger typhus of 1847—48. In the winter of 1879—80 the population of Upper-Silesia once more was exposed to want and hunger. Dr. Pistor says in his second report that "whoever was acquainted with the conditions of Upper Silesia, whoe-

ver really has learnt to know these poor, unhappy people, debased less by their own fault than by the guilt of others, as well as because of particular conditions, whoever did not deem it contrary to his dignity to enter their houses unannounced, could easily predict the misery and destitution which would be found here during the next winter. Those who had a look at these poor abodes in the month of December, found frequently no potatoes under the beds (the cellars of these people), no fuel in the stoves or in the stables; the handmill was covered with dust; the cabbage barrels reeking with the stench of their contents, and persons scantily covered with rags, trembling with hunger and looking pale and emaciated".

The life of the workmen of Upper-Silesia was (as we can see) not a happy one. When the prices of the necessary food were not too high, they were but slowly dying of starvation. But when bad weather, early frosts or excessive drought caused a scarcity of crops, pitiless Death quickly claimed great numbers.

The years 1879—1880 were just such bad harvest years. As long as the Upper-Silesian workmen quietly died away by misery, exhaustion and hunger, nobody took much notice of them. But now, at last, the over-frequent deaths made a disagreable stir in German society. The descriptions of the Upper-Silesian misery, horrible starvation and epidemic hunger typhus abounded. Even the Government promised to meditate the fate of this population perishing with

hunger. But little more came from all this stir than pious intentions and deep sighs.

In some districts the workmen revolted. The riots of the miners of the fiscal mine in Radzionkow took a more serious turn. The working masses at that place, driven to extremes, besieged the houses of officials, smashed window-panes, broke the money-safe open; and a few hated personalities were ill-handled. Of course trial ensued, the guilty persons were put before a jury at Bytom. There were more than 40 accused, among them some women and young boys under 18 years. On the 14th of June 1880 the jury passed the verdict of "guilty" on most of the accused. Thirty two persons were condemned to $4^1/_2$ years of prison and 7 years of hard labour, some others were confined for a few months. The official reports which mean reports softened down and where many facts are not mentioned, showed revolting abuses. Among other things, an official investigation made at the initiative of the State Mining Board showed clearly in what way the wages of the Upper-Silesian miners were paid, both at the private and fiscal mines. It was found that two minor officials whose part it was to pay the workmen their wages, gave them checks to be paid out by some publican or trader with whom they acquainted. And because one good turn deserves another, the honest traders paid these officials 25 pfennigs on each taler. By these proceedings our officials gained no small amount of money, but the poor miners habitually did

not receive any cash at all, and pressed by terrible want, had to beg for new checks, with which the same game was played again. In smaller mines the same thing was even more conveniently arranged. The officials in agreement with the publicans received from them at a great discount tickets for food, brandy and such things, and distributed these among the workmen as an advance on their monthly wages...

The Upper-Silesian workmen were not aware that they were victims of a well-regulated system which needed their combined forces to be removed. They turned their despair, when patience was exhausted, against lifeless things which they destroyed, and only incidentally against the most hated of foremen.

On these starving workmen the bad sanitary conditions of the factories could not but have a doubly noxious influence. Especially bad for their health was the work in the zinc-foundries, where the workmen ran risks of the terrible symptoms of lead-poisoning; for there were constantly both lead and zinc gases. About the sanitary conditions in these foundries the first report of Dr. Pistor mentions the following:

"The zinc-foundries differ greatly according to the various times at which they were built. The older foundries, which now are found only in small numbers, as they insufficiently utilise the ore, took little or no care of the health of their workmen, who continually were exposed to the poisonous zinc-gases escaping from the open muffles. The workmen clothed only

in a shirt and a pair of trousers, stood in front of the glowing furnace and easily caught cold from the draughty air-currents, which penetrated partly through the decaying walls and doors, partly through the oblong opening in the top of the roof of the foundry. In these foundries the floor was not paved, so that heaps of dust accumulated there, especially when the distilling retorts or the muffles were emptied out, viz., when the rubbish from the muffles was carried away.

"The new model foundries improved these conditions: the generation- and regeneration-furnaces are heated by gas, the floors are paved, and the muffles have balloons before them which precipitate the cadmium and zinc-gases. When emptied, the remains from the muffles do not fall at the feet of the workmen, but in recipients for ashes, so that less metallic gases are inhaled".

At those times opinions concerning the illnesses arising from the lead-poisoning differed. Mr. Herz, district surgeon from Bytom (Beuthen), in his report about the sanitary conditions in the district of Opole (Oppeln), writes the following:

"The pains in the muscles often felt by the workmen in the zinc-foundries are partly caused by rheumatism, partly by chronical lead-poisoning, the gums od those patients often showing the grey colour characteristic of lead-poisoning. I did not notice violent lead-poisoning, especially the fits of gripes, but often pains in the loins, in the arms and legs, which increase in the

night; in the lower extremities these pains are especially felt. Many of the workmen complain of itching and cold fits of fever. However in none of the workmen I perceived the paralysis of the upper extremities, though many of them had a certain weakness of the lower extremities resembling paralysis. The skin of such patients is flabby and like leather, the eyes sunken and the lips white".

Another observer, Mr. Schlockow, district surgeon from Rozdzien (Rosdzin), who also was the physician of one of the best constructed zinc-foundries, says about these matters: "The above-mentioned weakness of the ing or to catching cold, but to the zinc-gases. The prinlower extremities is owing not to the slow lead-poisoncipal danger threatening the zinc workers, as Dr. Herz rightly assumes, consists of lung-diseases caused by the dust; these illnesses are difficult to prevent, as are those which are the consequences of catching cold".

Notwithstanding the different opinions about the diseases in the zinc-foundries, Dr. Pistor admits that "it is absolutely necessary in the interests of the workmen to forbid the eating of food in the foundry. Extra rooms ought to be provided for this purpose, also lavatories ought to be there and sponges to keep before the mouth and nose, in order to prevent the noxious gases and dust from entering the lungs. As we know, the inhaled particles of zinc and lead are bad for the organism. The above measures for protecting the workmen,

though probably they will discontent the factory owners, would greatly alleviate these evils".

Dr. Pistor was right in his surmises: the owners of the zinc-foundries actually became loud in their protests, they pretended they would be ruined by these measures, and on the whole things remained as before. The workmen in the zinc-foundries soon lost their health by this dangerous work. A workman of 40 years liked an old man, and as at those times insurances did not yet exist the fate od such workmen was very sad. There existed in the foundries only relief-funds, and the sums paid out were so small that it was difficult to live on them. The workman obsolutely exhausted by his hard labour became a burden to his relations. The capitalists did not know pity, their only thought was to secure as much profit as possible, regardless of the cost in human lives.

About the conditions in the industrial district of Upper-Silesia we possess another interesting pamphlet of Dr. J. Schlockow, surgeon of the Miners' Union, entitled: "The Upper-Silesian industrial district, the cultural and sanitary conditions specially considered".

This author first notices the huge increase in the population of the former district of Bytom (Alt Beuthen) caused by the rapid development of mines and foundries. During 10 years from 1861—1871, the population of this district increased from 145,644 persons to 234,870 persons; this makes 89,234 persons, or 61%.

Up to the year 1875 the population had further increased on 41,591 persons, or 17,7%, i. e., to 174,469 persons. Such an unheard-of increase in the population was only in a small way the result of a high birth-rate: from 1862—1871 only 35,095 children were born there, 54,139 persons immigrated from other districts.

The great number of people who could neither read or write proves the low level of culture. In the kingdom of Prussia in 1871, among 1000 persons over 10 years of age were found 121,6 illiterates, in Silesia 142,2, in the district of Opole (Oppeln) in Upper-Silesia there were as many as 246, and still worse were matters in the former district of Bytom. In this district there were found among 1000 even as many as 345,2 illiterate persons. In the towns the conditions were somewhat better, but also here the percentage of those who could neither read or write was higher than the average percentage for the whole of Silesia. On every 1000 persons of the population were found illiterates: in the town of Bytom (Beuthen) 212,5, in Katowice (Kattowitz) 278,6, in the Krolewska Huta (Königshütte) 285,7, in the Gory Tarnowskie (Tarnowitz) 245,2, and in Myslowice (Myslowitz) 278,6. Incomparably worse conditions were found in the villages, where lived the great masses of workmen; in the district of Zabrze (Hindenburg) were 333,3 illiterates, in the district of Katowice (Kattowitz) 384,6, in the district of Bytom (Beuthen) 393, in the district of Tarnogóra (Tarnowitz)

411,6. In other words in this last districts $^2/_5$ of the population could neither read nor write.

Drawing attention to this low level of culture, Dr. Schlockow remarks: "Both in the towns and the villages of Upper-Silesia the women are still less civilised than the men, a fact exercising a bad influence over the households, the ways of living and the care and education of the children. The lack of culture among the mothers — says further Dr. Schlockow in his pamphlet — is, besides that, one of the principal factors to which the high death-rate of children in the district of Bytom ought to be imputed". Which, however, are the causes of the low cultural level and the great number of illiterate people? Dr. Schlockow explains these things in the following words: "At first, compulsory education had been legally introduced, but it was not put into practice: the supervision of schools was neither regular and earnest, nor conducted on pedagogical principles; it was enough when the preparations for the confirmation were made, and the catechism was known by heart. Compulsory education could not be put into practice because there were not schools enough to contain all the children who were of school-age. When three hundred children belonged to one class, the strength of the teacher was not equal to this task, and he could do only as much as circumstances allowed him. Moreover the parents were not interested in the schools; the Upper-Silesian peasants and workmen looked upon reading and writing as upon an art not being able to give bread,

and they tried to withdraw the child from the school as soon as possible and put it to work. All arguments against compulsory education were well received by these parents, and the utility and necessity of learning is even now an idea unknown to them. New methods of teaching were applied by the teachers, the teaching consisting mostly of memorising words and sentences which were often forgotten as soon as the pupil left the school, the more so as there was no further opportunity of coming again in touch with them".

No wouder that the workmen who so often could neither read nor write, had reached a very low level of culture and thought only of the present day, indifferent to what the morrow will bring them.

Wages were low. Dr. Schlockow says that the average wages of a miner amounted in 1874, for a working-day of 8 hours, to 2,64 marks daily. These were the wages of skilled workmen in the mines. How much lower were certainly those of unskilled men or of those who worked around the mine!

"And when pay-day came — Dr. Schlockow goes on — and as long as the hard earned money lasted, these people were gay, they danced and feasted, and the rest of the month they lived on credit".

A bad influence on the workmen's families was the ignorance of the women in household matters. "Instead of frequenting the sewing and cutting classes, the girls leave schools as soon as possible in order to work in the mines and the foundries or to assit in the buliding. Their

physical development is arrested, but even more their moral development is grieviously harmed by this labour. The earnings are used for finery and amusements. These girls marry early, lacking the sense of cleanliness and frugality, without having an idea of the education of children, without even being able to cook the simplest food".

The statement made by Dr. Schlockow about this moral and physical debasement caused by the work in the foundries and mines is much to the point. If this was true forty years ago, the same can be said about the work of women and girls in mines and foundries at the present day. Dr. Schlockow continues: "The prohibition of the Royal Mining Board in Breslau according to which women were not allowed to work underground was very needed". Of course, the Upper-Silesian mine magnates were of different opinion in this matter. Already as early as those days their organisation the Society of Owners of Mines and Foundries existed, and a strong protest was made by them against these regulations. However, in this case it was without results.

About the food conditions for the working classes Dr. Schlockow says "that they eat at irregular intervals, and the food taken is insufficient for the hard work they are obliged to do. After pay-day all kinds of food, sweets and drinks, the latter especially, are consumed, the rest of the month they live on potatoes, a sort of frothy sour soup, cabbage, herings and bread. *Meat seldom appears on their table!"*

The same author continues: "It may be said that the liquors are at the bottom of their life. An immense amount of brandy is consumed. Every feast begins with liquor and ends in general drunkeness and fighting. It is evident that under such circumstances there cannot grow up a strong generation. This race is small but enduring, though their resistance against illness is not great".

This small power of resistance rooting in all kind of unfavourable conditions peculiar to the workmen's life in Upper-Silesia caused a great mortality. In the period between 1861—1870 it was stated that from every 1000 inhabitants died:

in the whole Prussia	28,48
in the district of Opole (Oppeln)	29,46
in the district of Bytom (Beuthen)	37,00

Not better were the statistics from the rural communities. Here died on every thousand inhabitants:

in the whole Prussia (1865—1867)	29,31
in the district of Opole (Oppeln) (1861—1870)	29,68
in the district of Bytom (Beuthen) 1861—1870)	36,62

Especially in the Upper-Silesian industrial districts was the infant mortality, what Dr. Schlockow calls *"unnaturally high"*.

Actually, on 1000 dead persons the number of children under 5 years of age amounted to:

in the whole Prussia (1864—67)	466
in the district of Bytom (Beuthen) (1861—70)	633

In other words: in the industrial district of Upper Si-

lesia nearly two thirds of the deaths were children under five years of age!

Or on 1000 children between 1 and 5 years of age died an average number of:

in the whole Prussia (1864—67)	466
in the former district of Bytom (1861—70)	633
in the former district of Bytom (1864—66)	80

In the towns of the former district of Bytom, in the years 1861—66, on 1000 children between 1—5 years died 69, and in the villages of this same district this rate was even as high as 91, viz., almost one tenth of all of them! "If we put the mortality of children between 1—5 years as 100 in the whole Prussia, says Dr. Schlockow, then this figure mounts in the whole industrial district of Upper-Silesia to 170, and in the towns of the district to 146, in the villages even to 194". We perceive from this that in the villages of the industrial district the mortality was nearly twice as high as in the whole Prussia! These facts throw a gloomy light on the conditions of the Polish industrial workers in Upper-Silesia.

In dr. Schlockow's opinion, the great mortality of the children can be explained in the following manner: "Bad air in the lodgings, uncleanliness, unsuitable food, all these have their baneful effect on the tender bodies of the infants. They get the same food as adults: cabbage, potatoes, sour soup, bad sausages and herrings, and when this food does not suffice they are put to sleep with brandy, the remedy for all troubles. Barefooted, wearing only a dirty little shirt, the child is left

to its own devices, as soon as it is able to walk". Abou the lodgings dr. Schlockow makes the following remark "Filled with execrable odours, covered with dirt an over-crowded with people these slums ocasionally ar visited, when the number of inhabitants has to be regis tered, or when an epidemy rages there. Often on th bare earth, or on the wooden floor the boarders withou distinction of sex are lying, without having cleane themselves from the dirt, or without having change their workmen's apparel. The decent and clean work men's familes do not keep such boarders, however The same conditions are found in small private houses where from cellar to garret every available room i crowded with people". When reading such things w feel an indescribable horror and disgust! Small wonde when dr. Schlockow remarks of the high death rates o Upper-Silesia: *"In the civilised parts of Europe such things can scarcely be imagined"*.

It is a fact, that half a century ago, among the workmen of the Polish part of Upper-Silesia there were conditions hardly to be imagined. The Polish Silesian workmen were in the eyes of the German capitalists as machines which might be used to their utmost. The Polish working classes were on the treadmill of heavy labour, without trying to ameliorate their condition by self-help.

They were so chained up and suppressed by the mine and foundry owners, that the idea of organizing themselves in a body did not enter their heads. The

strike of the miners of Lower Silesia in the year 1869 did not affect those of Upper Silesia. The Miners' Union of Hirsch-Dunker, which had organised the Lower Silesian strike, began trying to draw the Upper Silesian miners to their organisation, but it had not the slightest effect. The rules of the organisation were published in the Polish language, proclamations were issued, but all without result. Only few individuals of the great bulk of workmen joined the Union. Of course, the Upper Silesian mine-owners, possessing for many years their well-regulalated Society, did not allow the Hirsch-Dunker's Union to pass by unnoticed. Evidently they turned with great hostility against them.

In the work published by this Society at the celebration of its 25 years jubilee we find the following: "The strike in Walbrych (Lower Silesia) gave rise to an energetic declaration of this Society against the meddling of the Miners' Union with the relations between workmen and employers. A proclamation was issued to the members of the Society in which they were advised not to turn away workmen for joining the Miners' Union, but to refuse such unions all interfering in the strifes between the workmen on the one side, and the officials and employers on the other".

The owners of mines and foundries could form as many organisations to defend their interests as they liked, but woe to the workmen, who wanted to do the same thing! In the year 1878, the Society of Owners of Mines and Foundries made investigations showing that

only 1 or $1^1/_2$% of the workmen working in the mines and foundries of Upper Silesia were members of the Miners' Union.

However, some consideration was shown towards the Miners' Union created by the liberal middle class politicians. On the contrary, against the social democrates the Upper Silesian capitalists showed downright hostility.

"At the same time (1878) — we find in the same jubilee work - the Society stated that socialism had not taken root among the miners here. Still it was agreed firmly to suppress every inclination towards socialism with great energy."

The German capitalists od Upper-Silesia knew quite well where to look for their deadly enemy. They knew they had to fear the spirit of conscious resistance against the capitalistic exploitation most of all! Forty years ago the Polish workman did not yet possess this consciousness. He suffered from this capitalistic sweating-system without a murmur.

In the year 1876, in Prussia, factory inspectors were introduced. The reports of these inspectors, notwithstanding the greatest consideration, could not but confirm the sad conditions of the Upper-Silesian working classes. Some extracts from the above reports following here. We mentioned before the way in which child labour was arranged as "private assistance" of the fathers. Notwithstanding the introduction of inspectors and their control child-labour did not cease. In the year

1880 for instance, in the district of Tarnogora (Tarnowitz) children of 14 years were employed in the mines. The number of children in the mines and foundries did not increase, but it was only owing to the crises in the industrial life by which all the labour was brought down to minimum. As soon, however, as better times for the industry came, the number of children used in factories and mines increased. In 1880 f. i., the above named district increased about 500, in the previous year this number already had been increased by 374.

And just as child-labour is a natural consequence of the development of capitalism, in the same way this development requires the employment of great numbers of women-workers. The reports of the factory inspectors throw a vivid light on this sad phenomenon. Dr. Bernouilli writes in 1877 from the district of Opole (Oppeln):" The first thing, which strikes the eye in the Upper-Silesian districts is the employment of women and girls for such work as generally only men are called upon to perform. At the smelting 10% of the workers are women, in the mines 7%. Though the employment of women in the mines is prohibited, they are used for cutting coal, for washing out ore, and in the iron-mines to draw up the iron-ore from the pits, a work, which according to medical opinion is inconsistent with the female constitution". The same state of things continued in the year 1881. In the report of the mine-inspection we find: "The heavy work of drawing up the ore from

the mines is only performed by girls". Dr. Bernouilli deplores the demoralisation resulting from the working of women, or more especially of girls together with men without supervision. These things occur in zinc foundries, quarries, tile-works, etc.

And what are the consequences of all this? The report of the inspection gives the following answer: "As a result of the employment of women on a large scale in the industry, the young wives have no notion about house-work and cannot get accustomed to family life, which is again the cause of the drinking habits of the men". To-day, thirty years later, conditions are not much better. Always still there may be found in the mines and foundries of Upper-Silesia large numbers of girls and women employed in tasks unsuitable for them.

The strike of the miners in the state-mine Krolewska Huta (Koenigshuette).

Towards the end of June 1871 the Upper-Silesian industrial district was the scene of the first important miners strike. The strike began in the biggest mine Krolewska Huta (Koenigshuette), the possession of the Royal Treasury at that time. While the total number of miners in the mines of Upper-Silesia amounted to 28,840 workmen in 1871, bringing up 6,532,127 tons for a value of 32,660,635 marks, the mine "Krolewska Huta" in this year produced 830,302 tons of coal. In the other state mine "Krolowa Ludwi-

ka" (Koenigin Louise), near Zabrze (Hindenburg), 622,543 tons of coal were produced. So the state mines were of great importance producing 22% of the coal output of Upper-Silesia.

The strike began suddenly on the 26th of June 1871 in the mine "Krol" and took a very wild turn. Its real cause was the misery of the Upper-Silesian miners. The discontent reigning among the workmen found bent just in the state-mine, which the defenders of capitalism pronounced to be the best governed mine, where conditions were exemplary. The external cause of the strike was the proclamation issued on the 26th of November 1870 by the State Mining Board at Breslau ordering the controlling of the workmen occupied in mines. The State Mining Inspection in the mine Krolewska Huta ordered that every workman had to receive a numbered ticket, which he had to give back after work hours. At the same time the number of lifts by which the workmen ascended from the mines was decreased in order to want fewer inspectors for the controlling.

The 26th of June this order had to be executed for the first time, and the workmen refused to receive the tickets. Workmen descended only in one pit. This unexpected strike struck the town and the administration with fright. The mayor Goetz wanted immediate military relief troops, the director of mine Meitzen opposed these measures, and for the moment the military

force was not summoned. The next day the workmen came to the pits, but did not go down to work. At first the workmen were quiet but forcing the people working about this one pit to leave their work.

In the afternoon a multitude of workmen assembled in the marketplace before the building of the Inspection, wishing to see the manager of the mine, Meitzen. At his wish a deputation of four workmen presented their demands. The principal demands were these:

1. The controlling tickets must be abolished
2. The abbreviation of work-hours put into practice two months before must be suspended, and shifts of 12 hours are to be reintroduced, instead of the 6 and 7 hours shifts of that time.
3. The decrease of municipal taxes.
4. The increase of wages.
5. Better coal for the own use of workmen

Moreover they demanded that the number of noncatolic officials woud be limited, and that the director of the mine would be chosen from their number. The managers most emphatically refused to carry out the three last demands, yet they promised to gratify the first two, but the workers must at first come back to their work. This reply exasperated the workmen, and the mass of people before the house now began to yell and shriek. They even penetrated into the house, threatened the director Meitzen and the Councillor Bauemler and threw stones at them. The police coming to the rescue of the threatened persons were received with

stones. The mayor Goetz was beaten with a stick. The mass of workmen losing all self-controll quickly broke all the windows of the Mining Inspection building. The near police station was demolished, and the police-sergeant living there maltreated. The public houses of the neighbourhood were ransacked for brandy, beer, cigarettes and such like things. The drunken crowd then began to plunder the shops, throwing the goods into the streets. Women and children carried a great part of these goods home. One of the shops of the merchant Wurm in the Tronnachfolger-street was set on fire. At eight o'clock the military force, wired for by the mayor at the beginning of the riots, arrived from Gliwitz. After one or two charges the streets were cleared and about 70 persons made prisoners. During the night fresh troops came from Kozle (Cosel), so that the town was full of soldiers.

Order reigned once more. On Wednesday June 28th the workmen worked in all pits. The arrestions continued. Count Stolberg, the president of the Province Silesia, Mr. von Viebohn, the president of the district of Opole (Oppeln), and Mr. Serlo, the representative of the Head Mining Board in Breslau — came on the 28th of June to the Krolewska Huta. Up to the 30th of June, 136 persons were put under arrest, these being at once summoned before a special court, delegated by the public prosecutor's office at Bytom (Beuthen). The day before, state of siege had been proclaimed by the Ministry in the following resolution:

"Whereas riots broke out in Koenigshuette in the district of Beuthen and as a consequence of this troops were brought thither to restore public safety, it, therefore, behaves the Royal Ministry to confirm herewith the proclamation of the state of siege in Koenigshuette, issued on the motion of the President of the province by the commander of these troops. Therefore, articles 5 and 6 of the Constitution are repealed.

Berlin, the 4th of July, 1871.

The Royal Ministry:

(Signed) Prince Bismarck, Count Roon, Count Itzenplitz, von Mueller, von Selchow, Count Eulenburg, dr. Leonhard".

Only six weeks afterwards, on the 15th of August, the state of siege was repealed. Of the arrested persons 117 were accused of rioting. The trial took place before the Court of Assizes in Bytom (Beuthen) towards the end of October of the year 1871. Ninety-five persons were condemned from 2 months to one year and 8 months imprisonment. The rest were acquitted.

Such has been the end of the big strike of miners in Upper Silesia. They lacked organisation, they lacked the experience which organisation gives to the labour.

Before the first big strike of the Upper-Silesian miners in 1889.

The reports of the factory inspectors during the first ten years of their work had to confess

that the conditions of the workmen of Upper-Silesia were very bad.

The report of the inspection of 1881 says that in many of the works of the mining and smelting industry great trouble is caused because small change is lacking, but also because it is found more convenient to pay two or more workmen together in banknotes or big pieces of money. The consequence of this practice was that the workmen in ordre to change this money and divide the wages went to the nearest public-house, and the publican naturally did a good shock of business, because part of the money was spent immediately on liquor. In this way the owners of mines and foundries helped to make drunkards of the workmen, only to spare themselves the trouble of looking for the necessary small money. In the smaller enterprises things ware even worse, for the workmen were partly paid with tickets, for which they could buy goods at a certain shopkeeper's where also liquor could be bought. What abuses took place on such occasion we have already described in a previous chapter.

Of the despotism to which the workmen were subjected we find an example in the reports of the inspection of 1888. The most important works, such as the foundries "Krolewska Huta" (Koenigshuette) and "Laura" (Laurahuette), the foundry Donnersmarck, "Huta Pokoju" (Friedenshuette), the works od the Upper-Silesian Society for mines and foundries, Ltd. and the Bismarck-foundry, did not possess any official works

orders, so that all the workmen depended on the goodwill of some official, who could act in as arbitrary way as he pleased.

And there, where works orders existed, they were made after the works orders for miners. And how "favourable" the latter were for the workmen, the reports of the inspection can prove as in the following example: one of these orders for the workmen contained 31 paragraphs fixing *fines from 3 — 6 marks*. "The factory orders" says the author "must be made with the assistance of the workmen, and must be also obeyed by the employer, and their appliance must not be left to the clerks". If the factory inspector drew people's attention to these facts, we may be sure that none of factory orders were practically framed. The factory orders were entirely partial, they were filled up with fines and punishments for every trifle; the employer did not trouble about them in the least, and the officials ruled arbitrary the workmen.

Closely connected with the system of monthly wages with an advance in the first half of the month was the deplorable practice of workers of taking on credit at the small shopkeeper's, who pitilessly exploited them. The Upper-Silesian employers founded in the year 1881 cooperative stores for their workmen, ostensibly to cope with these abuse. Taking, however, good care that these societies did not become self-governed organisations, they reserved the rights of controlling them by one of their cashiers. The management of these

co-operative stores were chosen by their members, but the owners looked to it that only such persons as suited them should obtain seats in these boards of management. The dependence on the small shop-keepers decreased somewhat, but the dependancy on the industrial works increased. The co-operative stores for workmen became in reality the stores of the works-owners. The members had to pay the goods in cash, but this was more easily said than done, as seen from the reports of the factory inspector of 1890. "The buying for cash makes difficult the payment of wages", and the co-operative stores were forced to give goods on credit. By the foundation of the co-operative stores the owners had an extra weapon in their hands to ensure the dependency of the workmen.

Another social effort of the industrial lords was the erecting of workmen's houses and night lodgings. The report of the industrial inspection of the year 1881 says that the bad conditions of the houses in Upper-Silesia induced on the 16th of February 1880 many official circumstancial regulations about the keeping of boarders to appear. These conditions, however, could not immediately be improved. "The great number of boarders had not suitable lodgings, therefore the boards of management had to build as quickly as possible night-asylums for single workers and to bring them to live in". It was said that nearly everywhere the night asylums fill shut of the regulations.

How miserable the lodgings of those times were

is shown by the police regulations about boarders. F. i., in § 2 we find that the rooms given to boarders may not correspond with rooms in which persons of the other sex are sleeping. § 3: these rooms must have a height of 2.35 metres, a door, which can be closed and at least one window which can be opened. To live in the basements was only allowed when a medical dispensation was given, in the garrets boarders might not be kept. § 4 says: boarding rooms may not be directly connected with W. C's, animals may not be kept there neither vegetables apt to rot. According to § 3 every boarder ought to have 10 cubic metres of air and 4 square metres of surface. According to § 6 every boarder must possess a straw mattress, a good woolen blanket, and a towel, and every two boarders must have one washbasin.

The living houses and night lodgings undoubtedly improved the sanitary conditions. There were, however, fixed regulations which the workmen had to follow, and when they left the works, they had immediately to leave their lodgings. It can then be easily understood that the living in these houses of the employers was for them very dull. On the other hand the works procuring lodgings for their workers kept a tight hand over them. Apparently the building of these houses had been an improvement; in reality, however, the Polish workmen were in this way still chained down more heavily and made absolutely dependent on the owners of the mines and foundries. There can be no doubt, that in the night-

lodgings the workmen could not feel at ease under the rigid regulations.

The causes then for discontent of the Upper-Silesian workmen were many. In the other mining districts of Germany there were similar conditions. Everywhere the rule of the capital was spreading misery and poverty among the workmen. At last in the year 1889 the tension discharged itself in the numerous strikes among the miners. The miners of Westphalia were the first to enter the lists in the middle of May. Their fight was reechoed all over the Germany, in all mines the miners rose up for the struggle. This general strike movement penetrated also in the Polish part of Upper-Silesia, this country long since well-known by the contrast existing between the wealthy mining magnates, Donnersmarks, Thiell-Winklers and others, and the misery of the great masses of Polish workmen.

This was the first time that the Upper-Silesian workman oppressed and cowed down by the capitalistic upholders of civilization rose in angry protest. The strike began in Upper-Silesia on the 16th of May and lasted until the 25th; according to official reports, about 32½%, of the workmen took part in it.

And the Upper-Silesian miners had good reasons for striking. In other mining districts the conditions of the miners were bad, in Upper-Silesia they were desperate. The lowest wages, the longest working hours, the greatest sweating of the workmen by the paid ser-

vants of the capitalists, fell to the lot of the Polish workmen of Upper-Silesia.

The following figures will prove this. The women were employed in great numbers. In the year 1888, the collieries occupied the total amount of 41,896 workmen, among them 4,124 women, or nearly 10%. Women formed the 10th part of all the labour. In the iron-mines in 1888, 3,285 workmen worked, among them were 1,395 women, or 42½%! In other words ²/₅ of the workers were women! And in the zinc and lead mines a total amount of 10,177 workmen were occupied, among them 2,663 women, or 26%, consequently the fourth part. In the year 1888, in the total mining industries were occupied 55,360 workmen, among them 8,182 women, or round 13%.

The wages of these workmen were very low. After the statistics of the Upper Society of Owners of Mines and Foundries the average wages for a year, in 1888 in collieres, amounted to: for adult workmen 615 marks; for youths under 16 years of age 203 marks; for women 218,50 marks, the average wages being 575 marks. In the iron mines the average yearly wages of workman over 16 years of age were 295 marks; of youths 167,50 marks; of women 217 marks; medium 309,50 marks. In the zinc and lead mines the average wages for adult workmen were 307,50 marks yearly, for youths 170 marks, for women 211,50 marks, the average wages being 433 marks.

The investigation committees named by the Go-

vernment, the partiality of which already at those times was severaly criticised, confirmed that in March 1889 of the 29,331 miners of the collieries of Upper-Silesia earned (for one shift):

454	persons	3,50 — 6,00	marks
1447	„	3,00 — 3,50	„
4316	„	2,50 — 3,00	„
5578	„	2,00 — 2,50	„
9139	„	1,50 — 2,00	„
5164	„	1,00 — 1,50	„
3233	„	0,50 — 1,00	„

Generally taken, 80% of workmen earned 2,50 marks for one shift of ten, eleven or twelve hours, and often even longer! These starvation wages were pronounced to be "sufficient", and the workmen ought have no "well-founded reasons" for complaint.

The Upper-Silesian mines are for the greater part in possession of catholic magnates, influential nembers of the "Centrum" party. With a view to this fact it is very characteristic that the "Schlessische Volkszeitung", an organ which warmly defended the cause of the striking miners in the Ruhr district, held quite different opinions regarding the badly paid workmen of Upper-Silesia. On the 17th of May 1889 this newspaper wrote about the foundry "Krolewska Huta" (Koenigshuette): "The lazy workers of the pits of Krug stopped work, because their wages were not as high as those of the industrious and punctual men (!!). Riots did not take place, because the sensible workmen who received 20

to 30 pfennigs extra wages went on with their work. A strike seems not to be feared".

The press owned by the owners of the mines could scarcely have thrown a more unfavourable light on the laziness of these workmen. On the 19th of May, this same news-paper announced "that the Westphalia instigators had been arrested". This means that the strike in Upper-Silesia was only "made by outsiders". As though wages under 2 marks for a working time of more than 12 hours could not be sufficient cause for "instigation"! In the mine "Niemcy" (Deutschland) near Swientochlowice (Schwientochlowitz) a conflict took place between the strikers, the strikebreakers and the police. This conflict immediately was called a "big riot" by the press, which defended the capitalistic interests. The troops were called. The 19th of May the same news-paper announced that the mine-owners of Upper-Silesia were ready to increase the wages about 10—15%! And really the wages of cutters and carriers were in the year 1890 about 40 pfennigs (or 17%) higher. Then the strike of workmen denounced as lazy fellows was not without consequence. The 26th of May the strike was finished. The strikers everywhere had taken up their work again.

Beside an increase of wages this elemental outbreak had still other positive consequences. The Ministry denominated a committee to investigate the causes of this strike, and even this official committee had to acknowledge in their report, that the wages of the

Silesian miners were exceedingly low and their working hours exceedingly many. The employers and their agents, managers and officials, had learned, that even these suppressed and despised workers in the subterranean regions of Upper-Silesia had began to be conscious of their power when united. The "Polish cattle", to use an expression of the German industrial lords, could not be left out their consideration any longer; wages were increased, and the treatment of the workmen changed.

The strike of Upper-Silesia put the thought of organisation in the minds of the more intelligent workmen. But this healthy idea was nipped in the bud by a group of persons gathering round the editors of the conservative news-paper "Katolik" (The Catholic) appearing in Bytom (Beuthen). Towards the end of 1889 they founded "The Society for Mutual Relief", an organisation which during the twenty years of its existence had done nothing for the Upper-Silesian workmen. Instead of entering the lists against the predominance of the Upper-Silesian capitalists, this organisation worked against the modern socialistic labour movement. Instead of adding something to the strength of the labour movement, this Society went on weakening it for the benefit of the Upper Silesian capital and for the loss of the Upper Silesian workmen. The miserable existence of "The Society for Mutual Relief" was ended in the year 1909 when it was dissolved in the "Polish Trade Unions Federation".

Before the world war.

In the following period of 25 years, up to the moment when the world war broke out there was probably not one year in the course of which the discontent of the Polish miners in Upper Silesia did not show itself in a series of so-called "wild" strkes. These broke out sporadically in one mine or another. The purpose of these strikes was usually to secure a rise of wages or better treatment of the workmen by the managers and supervisors. After one, or at most, two days the miners returned to their work without any gain. Trade organizations were not able to exercise any influence upon the conditions of wages or work. As the State authorities cooperated strictly with the managers of the mines and foundries the workmen's organizations could not develop. According to the old Prussian law concerning associations it was necessary to register the members of trade unions in the police office. The police authorities did not keep the information thus received to themselves, but handed over the lists of workmen who dared to enter trade unions, to the administrations of the mines and foundries. The owners of the mines and foundries who were homogeneously organized in the Upper-Silesian Society of Owners of Mines and Foundries, formed from the lists of organized workmen sent to them the so-called "black lists". The organized workman was thrown out into the street. The poor man might then trudge from mine to mine and from foundry to foundry.

He had to work, so as to keep himself and his family alive, and he wished to work, but there was no work for him anywhere, unless he proved that he had left the trade union. If he did not wish to do this he had nothing to do but to take any kind of work outside the great mining and foundry industry, or emigrate to the Westphalian Rhine coal-fields. Polish miners and smelters were exposed to this kind of persecution if they were bold enough to join their trade organization, and this went on up to the time when the events of November 1918 took place.

Besides this, the owners of mines and foundries had many other means for impeding the freedom of action of the working-class in Upper Silesia. In the mining industry there existed a Mutual Aid Society, the purpose of which was to help its members in case of illness. In consequence of the state of things in Upper Silesia the miners had no influence as to the way in which the Society was administered. The elections of the "senior members" took place not secretly, on papers, but openly. The result of this was that there were chosen either those of the miners who were flatterers of the employers, or foremen, who afterwards on the Board of the Mutual Aid Society did not care about the interests of the members, but for the mine upon which, as officials, they were dependent. In the foundries, again, there existed Sick Funds. Here also the workmen were

completely dependent upon the will of their employers, who, through their officials, ruled the funds. The statutes of these institutions were so drawn up that if a member left the works in which he had hitherto worked, sometimes even for fifteen years, he lost all his rights as a member. In this way pressure was brought to bear upon the workmen not to leave their work and to be contented with such conditions as the foundry one-sidedly dictated to them. In a word, the miners and foundry men in Upper Silesia were so bound down in the chains of economic dependence by the great industrial magnates that they were obliged to agree to the conditions of pay and work which the administrative Boards of the establishments forced upon them.

How weak were the trade organizations of the workmen in Upper Silesia before the outbreak of the war is shown, for example, by the fact that in the coal mines, which already before the war employed a round 140,000 workmen, there belonged to the Socialist Miners' Trade Union at most 5,000 members. The body of miners belonging in Upper Silesia to the Polish Trade Unions Federation numbered then at most 15,000. With such weak labour organization there could be no question of the owners of the mines agreeing to negociate with them on any subject at all. Hence the mass strike movement of the miners which broke out in Upper Silesia at the end of May 1913 and lasted more than a week in most of the mines there, led to no result.

The labour organisation in the Upper Silesian foundries was still weaker. The Socialist Union of Metal Workers had scarcely 500 members, out of 50,000 workmen employed in the iron, zinc and lead foundries. This insignificant handful of organized men was absolutely powerless.

The position of the working class in Upper Silesia, which is mostly made up of Poles, was still worse by the fact that they were opressed by the Prussian denationalizing system. The great industrial magnates understood quite well that the cultivation of Germanization and the hindering by this means of the cultural development of Polish workmen was in their class interest. The Polish workman's child was tought in the primary school in the foreign German language, it profited but little by this schooling and left its school very little educated. This was to the interest of the owners of the mines and foundries: it was easier to exploit the stupid, ignorant workman. Just for this reason the great industrial magnates in Upper Silesia were the most zealous adherents of Germanization. Suppose, there was the question of a change in favour of the workmen, for example, of holding secret elections of the "seniors" of the Mutual Aid Society. The mine-owners of Upper Silesia immediately raised a great cry that such a change could not be agreed to, as it would give rise to the increase of the "Pan-Polish propaganda". With the bogey of the supposed danger of

"Pan-Polish propaganda" it was always possible to hinder the slightest reform which would have relieved the Polish working class in Upper Silesia in its struggle with German capital. By order of the owners of the mines and foundries the officials scorned the workmen, and treated them as if they were working cattle. Such words of abuse as "Polish pigs", "Polish cattle" were in everyday use in the mines and foundries. Things even went so far that trained anti-Polish officials often tried to beat the workmen.

The Polish workmen were also scorned in the Government offices. Everywhere the officials, who had been for the most part sent from Germany and did not know Upper Silesian circumstances, wronged the Polish workmen. With what brutality, for instance, did the German judges in the courts adress an accused Polish workman! German arrogance knew no bounds when that industrious Polish workman was in question. He was only good to toil for his German masters. The workman employed in the great industries in Upper Silesia was far more exploited than was ever the workman of the same category in the German parts of the State. In Upper Silesia the pay of the miners and metal workers was always the lowest, and their hours of work were the longest.

Hence no wonder that the Upper Silesian magnates grew up, through the wrong of the Polish workmen, into the richest people in Germany. Ten years ago

a considerable sensation was created by a pamphlet published by a former Prussian State Councillor Mr. Adolph *Martin*. The facts quoted in this pamphlet were derived from official sources. The author gave different particulars as to how the fortunes, amounting to millions, of the German Croesus' of capital arose and what incomes they had had ten years before. It was known at the same time that the Polish part of Upper Silesia had the richest magnates of all the provinces of the Prussian State and of the German Federation. It resulted from Martins' figures that, among the ten richest people who then lived in Germany seven were domiciled in Polish Upper Silesia and were possessed together of a fortune of 564 millions of marks. The German public heard with amazement that the unostentatious Upper Silesian district was the seat of powerful magnate families, who, in the race for gold, had succeeded in amassing immense fortunes. In the first rank of these we see names of Prince Donnersmarck, Prince Hohenlohe - Oehringen and Prince of Pless. These Upper Silesian capitalists are, on the one hand, the owners of, or shareholders in the mines and foundries in the Upper Silesian industrial district, and, on the other hand, they are the owners of wide expanses of land in the Upper Silesian country.

Years ago, the wealth of these proud Upper Silesian magnates did not play any considerable part in comparsion with the noble familes in West Germany. They contrived, it is true, in Polish Upper

Silesia, to get possession, at the expense of the Polish people, of immense expanses of land after that unhappy heritage of the Piasts came under the rule of Prussia, but the country was then poor. It was not easy to get a great deal out of the half-starved serf-peasants, toiling on barren earth. But since that time it was found that the earth of Upper Silesia held in its depths the priceless treasures: coal, iron and tin, and their exploitation was begun in the XIX century. Then golden times came for the Upper Silesian magnates. The thousands of the industrious Polish Upper Silesian people were driven into the dark mines, thousands were forced under a heavy yoke in the iron and zinc foundries, or into the lead foundries with their poisonous emanations. The Polish workman toiled from morning until night and from night until morning, and led the life of a slave of capital, but the castles of the Upper Silesian magnates increased ever more and more in splendour and wealth, and their families grew in importance and power. They knew how to divide the fruits of the work of the Polish people: miserable crumbs were cast to the Polish slaves of capital, and the lion's share was appropriated by the magnates themselves. Generations of the industrious Polish ants went down into the grave, and their places were taken by others. Poverty and want were the portion of the fathers, and that heritage descended to the sons. It was otherwise with the families of the magnates: each new generation

handed down to its successor a larger fortune, squeezed out of the blood and sweat of tens of thousands of Polish workmen.

The numbers given in the pamphlet of Councillor Martin ("Unter dem Scheinwerfer") show, how quickly these magnates' fortunes increased in Upper Silesia. Now, when the Upper Silesian people is to decide by a plebiscite whether it is to continue to be they prey of the German magnate families, or whether it is to free itself from their yoke, it will not be irrelevant to recollect these figures. Upon the basis of taxation statistics, Mr. Martin has estimated the personal fortunes and annual income as follows:

	Fortune in millions of marks		Income in millions of marks	
	1895	1908	1895	1908
Prince Donnersmarck	71	178	2.7	12
Prince Hohenlohe-Oehringen .	48	151	2.7	7
Prince von Pless.	84	84	2.1	1.9
Count Schaffgotsch.	21	79	2.2	4.5
Count Thiele-Winkler. . . .	19	74	0.68	3.4

Scarcely in thirteen years both the fortunes and the yearly revenues of these Upper Silesian potentates of capital have increased immensely. The Prince's von Pless fortune alone is an exception, but this is quite

easily explained. The old prince died in 1907 leaving six hildren. The entail, composed of a vast landed property and coal mines, passed on to the eldest son, but the widow and the other children were left a considerable income in cash. Besides, the income of the head of the house has again risen considerably. Martin estimated it in 1910 at 2.49 millions of marks.

The fortunes of the five magnates specified in the above table amounted altogether in 1895 to 240 millions, and thirteen years later to 565 millions of marks. The annual income of these five men during the same period increased from 10.38 millions of marks in 1895 to 27.9—29.9 millions of marks in 1908. Such was one side of the medal. How was the reverse?

In the whole of the Upper Silesian mining and foundry industry there worked in 1895 a total of 103,245 workmen. Their wages amounted to 73,152,723 marks, that is, on the average, each workman got annually only 708.45 marks! The five magnate families had at this time as much income as 14,645 industrial workmen with their numerous families. In 1908 there was paid in wages to the 182,106 workmen in the Upper Silesian mines and foundries a sum of 192,841,621 marks, so that each of them earned on an average scarcely 1058.95 marks. The five magnate families had now as much annual income as 28,235 workmen with their numerous families!

The last few years before the war were fat years

for the mining and foundry industry in Upper Silesia. During the war the orders for different materials needed by the army gave unheard-of profits to the industrial works. Undoubtedly, in such circumstances, the accumulation of the capital progressed rapidly, so that these works probably have now at their disposal a capital amounting to milliards, and the millions of their annual income have considerably increased. The industrious Polish population of Upper Silesia paid during the war to Germany, who oppressed and exploited it, a tribute of 56,000 killed, 42,000 disabled, 16,000 widows, 25,000 orphans. And as the result of all this it is still poorer and more distressed than before the war.

The period of the war.

Before the war the miners and smelters of Upper Silesia earned less and worked longer than their follow-workmen in the German parts of the Empire. During the war their situation became still worse. We can learn this fact if we compare the gains of the different categories of workmen in the coal mines in Upper Silesia and in Westphalia. The figures are taken from the official statistics published in the State bulletin „Reichsanzeiger".

The average wages of cutters amounted daily as follows:

	In Upper Silesia	In Westphalia	Minus in Upper Silesia
	Marks		
2nd quarter of 1914	4.87	6.19	1.32
2nd „ „ 1915	5.28	6.66	1.38
2nd „ „ 1916	6.62	8.05	1.43
2nd „ „ 1917	7.79	10.00	2.21
2nd „ „ 1918	10.11	12.61	2.50

We see that, on the whole, the earnings of cutters increased equally in both coal fields till the middle of 1916, so that the difference between the average gain of a cutter in Westpaila and im Upper Silesia wavered between 1.32 and one mark to the disadvantage of the Upper Silesian district. But beginning with the third quarter of 1916 the gain of cutters rose more in Westphalia than in Upper Silesia: in the third quarter of 1916, the Upper Silesian cutter earned, on an average, daily 1.65 marks less than his fellow-workman in Westphalia; in the fourth quarter of 1916 the difference already amounted to 1.94 marks, in the second quarter of 1917 to 2.21 marks, and in the second quarter of 1918 it amounted even to 2.50 marks. The prices of food, which during the war was dealt out in rations (food tickets system), were not higher in Westphalia than in Upper Silesia. On the whole, they were equal in the two coal districts. Before the war the circumstances of the miners in Up-

per Silesia were worse than those of the miners in Westphalia, and this difference to the disadvantage of Upper Silesia has increased during the war. We must call attention to one more condition when comparing the earnings of cutters in the two districts. The Westphalian cutter worked already before the war not longer than 8 hours daily, whereas the Upper Silesian cutter worked, on an average, 10 hours. The average gain of a cutter in Westphalia amounted per hour in the second quarter of 1918 to 1.75 marks, and that of an Upper Silesian cutter only to 1 mark, or 0.57 marks less per hour.

Similarly the increasing gains of other categories of workmen in Upper Silesian collieries compared unfavourably with those in Germany during the war.

According to the same official statistics, the daily earnings of the other categories of pit workers (besides the cutters) amounted, on an average, as follows:

	In Upper Silesia	In Westphalia	Minus in Upper Silesia
	Marks		
2nd quarter of 1914	3 55	4.52	0.97
2nd „ „ 1915	3.82	4.69	0.87
2nd „ „ 1916	4.60	5.37	0.77
2nd „ „ 1917	5.50	6.66	1.16
2nd „ „ 1918	7.19	8.44	1.25

The average daily gain of an adult workman about the mine amounted in each of these years to:

	In Upper Silesia	In Westphalia	Minus in Upper Silesia
	Marks		
2nd quarter of 1914	3.24	4.37	1.1
2nd „ „ 1915	3.52	4.62	1.10
2nd „ „ 1916	4.18	5.21	1.03
2nd „ „ 1917	4.90	6.37	1.47
2nd „ „ 1918	6.49	8.10	1.61

At last, the Upper Silesian miners could not endure such a deterioration of their circumstances. Although Upper Silesia was considered as a territory threatend by the enemy and the state of siege was there particularly rigorous, yet in the summer of 1917 there broke out "wild" strikes in many mines. The military authorities ordered the striking miners to come back immediately to their work, threatenig severe penalties. This "wild" strike movement was especially marked in the mines belonging to the successors of Mr. Giesche, near Szopienice (Schoppnitz). The military authorities announced these mines as militarised, and in this way, with one stroke of the pen, the miners working there were made to count as being in military service. But the bitterness of their feelings was such that many of them did not come back to their work and hid themselves, in spite of the fact that they ran the risk of terrible punishments. Several hundreds of miners were, for the "crime" of disobedience, brought to trial before court-martial and sentenced to long

terms of imprisonment. The most obstinate were made soldiers and sent to the trenches at the front. The consequence of this were, in the hearts of the Polish miners, measureless bitterness and hatred to the tormenting system of German brutality.

The Polish working people fell into terrible misery during the war. Their gains were small, quite insufficient in consequence of the increasing dearness of provisioning. To increase the evil, food was dealt out on tickets in rations of such minute quantities that people always were hungry. Still in the mines and foundries more and more work was required. The miners could not produce enough coal. As much coal as possible was required from them, and no attention was paid to the fact that, with very insufficient food, the miners' strength was more and more diminished.

But on the other hand, year by year the owners of the Silesian mines and foundries gathered in greater gains on the war. A few figures will illustrate this statement. The Eisenbahnbedarf Ltd. Co. (generally called "Friedenshuette") paid out in 1913 — 1917 the following dividends: 4, 2, 10, 15 and 20 per cent. In the three last mentioned years the shareholders got 45% as dividends, almost half of the company capital. The Limited Company "Oberschlesische Eisenindustrie" did not pay any dividends for some years before the war; very seldom it was able to pay a dividend of 1½ or 3%. The outbreak of the war immediately cured this business. Already in 1915 the dividend jumped up

to 6%, in 1916 to 10%, and in 1917 it was even 14%. The foundry "Silesia", Limited Company in Paruszowiec (Paruschowitz), near Rybnik paid in 1917 only 21% of dividend, in the year 1916 — 18%, and in 1915 — 7%. In these three years the shareholders received a total of 46% of dividends, The Donnersmarck Foundry Company, Ltd., at Zabrze paid in the year 1917 only 22% of dividends; in the period of four years 1914 — 1917 the shareholders received a total of 70% of dividends, upwards of 2/3 of the company capital. The Limited Company at Lipiny (Lipine) (zinc works) gave in the year 1917, 20% of dividends and in the three previous years 18%, 15% and 10%.

Altogether the above mentioned limited companies had following interests from their capitals;

	1915	1916	1917
Brutto gain	28.2	48.0	57.7
Deductions	12.4	16.4	21.7
Net gain	13.6	21.2	39.9
Dividends	10.9	15.1	19.0

Throughout the war the German lords became always richer, and the Polish miners and foundry workmen in Upper Silesia fell always into greater distress. The system of Germanization was working throughout the whole war with merciless consistency. No concessions concerning the equal rights of the Polish population in Upper Silesia were thought of in Government circles.

Such was the situation in Upper Silesia when the events of November 1918 happened. The Polish working people in Upper Silesia expected from the new republican government the fulfilment of their national demands. But this illusion quickly vanished. Already at the end of 1918, the state of siege was proclaimed, on a futile pretext, in Krolewska Huta („Königshütte") and its immediate neighbourhood. Later on the state of siege was proclaimed in all the districts with Polish population. Special military formations (the so-called Grenzschutz), were sent to Upper Silesia. The German soldiers behaved as if they were in an enemy country. The Central Government of Berlin nominated Horsing, a German Socialist of the socialist right, to be State High Commissioner for Upper Silesia. The era of the Horsing government was for the Polish working class one uninterrupted period of persecution. One exceptional order was followed by another, and all of them were aimed against the Polish workman. The German owners of the mines and foundries looked with satisfaction upon this kind of government which was defending their state of possession. The bitterness of feeling among the masses of Polish workmen, tormented in an unheard-of manner, had its issue in the mutiny of August, 1919. It has been proved that this mutiny was provoked on purpose by Horsing. He prepared everything for putting it down in streams of blood with the aid of Grenzschutz and other military formations which had been brought into Upper Silesia. In the industrial district

some of the Polish workmen rose, almost without weapons, against their oppressors. Martial law was introduced. The insurgent workmen, when caught, were shot without trial, others were inhumanly tortured. They were beaten in the police courts and in the prisons—everywhere where they got into the clutches of Horsing's executioners. The furious soldiers of the Grenzschutz knew no measure in their savagery. Thousands of Polish workmen were obliged to flee as fugitives into Poland. Horsing's iron rule in Silesia continued till Ferbuary, 1920, i. e., until the arrival of the allied troops and the Inter-Allied Commission.

It was only then that the Polish workman began to breathe freely.

He wishes to be and to feel a free Pole. One year of Horsing's government has fixed in his mind the fact that he will not be a free Pole if Upper Silesia remains under Germany. But he will be so when he is united to his Polish brother-workmen under the one roof of the Polish Commonwealth.

On the plebiscite day the Polish workman in Upper Silesia will give expression to this desire of his by voting for the union of Upper Silesia to Poland.

He awaits with a great longing the day of the plebiscite which will be for him a day of reckoning between him and his German oppressors for all the wrong they have done him. That wrong is immeasurable.

Binder
Gaylord Bros.
Makers
Syracuse, N. Y.
PAT. JAN 21, 1908

YB 647

679933

HD8459
.S5C32

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY